OPPRESSION AND THE OPPRESSORS

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OPPRESSION AND THE OPPRESSORS

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THE PUBLISHER'S INTRODUCTION

In the Name of Allah, Most Compassionate, Most Merciful

All praise is due to Allah, we praise Him, seek His Support, Guidance and Forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah ﷻ from the evils of our selves and from our misdeeds. He whom Allah ﷻ guides will never be misguided by anyone and he whom Allah ﷻ misguides will never be guided by anyone. I testify that there is no God but Allah ﷻ Alone, having no partner, and I testify that Muhammad ﷺ is His Servant and Messenger.

﴿O believers, fear Allah as He should be feared, and see you do not die, save as Muslims.﴾ (*Al-Imran*: 104)

﴿Mankind, fear your Lord, who created you of a single soul, and from it created its mate, and from the pair of them scattered abroad many men and women; and fear Allah by whom you demand one another, and the wombs; surely Allah ever watches over you.﴾ (*An-Nisa'*: 1)

﴿O believers, fear Allah, and speak words hitting the mark, and He will set right your deeds for you and will forgive your sins. Whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has won a mighty triumph.﴾ (*Al-Ahzab*: 70-71)

The truest discourse is the Qur'an, the most noble of traditions is the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ, the most evil of things is their novelties, every novelty is a *bid'a*, every *bid'a* is a *dhalala* (act of misguidance) and every *dhalala* is in Fire.

-1-

THE MOST BELOVED CREATURES TO ALLAH

Ibn Mas'ud ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "All creatures are Allah's ﷻ dependents, and therefore; the most beloved amongst them to Allah ﷻ is he who treats His (Allah's) dependents nicely."

According to Al-Ajlouni (*Kashf Al-Khafa'* [1220]): "This tradition was reported by At-Tabarani in *Al-Kabir wa Al-Awsat*, by Abu Nu'aym in *Al-Hilya*, and by Al-Bayhaqi in *Ash-Shu'ab*, on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud ﷺ, as *Hadith Marfu'*.

The above tradition was also reported by Abu Nu'aym, Abu Ya'la, At-Tabarani, Al-Bazzar, Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya, and other scholars on the authority Anas ﷺ, as *Hadith Marfu'*.

At-Tabarani reported the tradition on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud ﷺ in different wording: "...the most beloved amongst them to Allah ﷻ are those who are beneficial to His dependents."

Ad-Daylami also quoted the tradition from Anas ﷺ in different wording: "All creatures are Allah's ﷻ dependents and under His Protection. Therefore, the most beloved amongst the creatures to Allah ﷻ are those who treat His dependents nicely."

Al-Askari reported: "Ibn 'Umar ﷺ said, "The prophet ﷺ was asked about the most beloved people to Allah ﷻ, and he replied, "The most beneficial people to people."

At-Tabarani reported: "Zayd Ibn Khalid said in a *Hadith Marfu'*, "The best deed is that which is beneficial, the best guidance is that which is followed, and the best amongst people are those who are beneficial to people." This tradition was supported by Al-Bayhaqi in *Ad-Durar* (*Ash-Shu'ab*) and Abu Ya'la on the authority of Anas ﷺ through a weak chain of transmission.

Ibn Uday quoted Ibn Mas'ud ﷺ as saying in a different wording: "All creatures are Allah's ﷻ dependents, and the most beloved amongst them to Him is the most beneficial to His dependents."

According to An-Nawawi, this tradition is weak, because the chain of transmitters included Youssef

Ibn Atiyya who was, according to scholars, unreliable (*Al-Fatawa*).

Al-Hafidh Abdulazim Al-Mundiri quoted Anas ﷺ as saying (*Hadith Marfu'*): "All creatures are Allah's ﷻ dependents, and the most beloved amongst them to Him is the most beneficial to His dependents."

According to Abdullah Mohamed As-Sullami, *Allah's dependents* are: "Allah's poor servants, for all creatures are in need of Allah ﷻ, and it is Him ﷻ who sustains them."

According to Al-Askari, the above tradition contains a metaphor. This is to say that whilst Allah ﷻ is the provision Provider for His Servants and their sustainer, His servants are like His Dependents." A similar meaning is expressed by the following tradition: "There are certain people who are special to Allah ﷻ; the people of the Qur'ān."[1]

According to Ibn Hajar Al-Makki, the tradition: "All creatures are Allah's ﷻ dependents, and the most beloved amongst them to Him is the most beneficial to His dependents ", was reported through

[1] Reported by Ibn Majja and classed by Al-Albani as authentic.

some chain of transmission which are all weak, and the wording of some is, "All creatures are Allah's ﷻ dependents and under His Protection. Therefore, the most beloved amongst the creatures to Allah ﷻ are those who treat His dependents nicely, and the most despicable creatures to Allah ﷻ are those who mistreat His dependents."

-2-

ALLAH'S ﷻ HONOUR TO MANKIND

Allah ﷻ says: ﴿We have honoured the Children of Adam and carried them on land and sea, and provided them with good things, and preferred them greatly over many of those We created.﴾ (*Al-Isra'*:70)

According to Al-Qurtubi, ﴿honoured﴾ in this context refers to nobility and preference. This is the honour of creating them in the best form rather than the hounour of providing them with wealth. In other words, this honour includes man's creation in such a form; that is to say, height, good looks, and the ability to be transported on land and sea. These blessings are only specific to mankind, whom Allah ﷻ created with certain features enabling him to eat, drink and wear. Unlike other beings, mankind is capable of earning a living, wear clothes and eat cooked food. Animals, on the other hand, may eat rotten meat and uncooked food.

According to At-Tabari, ﴿We have honoured the Children of Adam﴾ means "We have invested mankind with power over other creatures and made the rest of creatures available to them." ﴿And

carried them on land and sea﴾ means "We carried them on the beasts' back and on the boats which We have made for them." ﴿And provided them with good things﴾ refers to the lawful food and drink. ﴿And preferred them greatly over many of those We created﴾ Preference in this context refers to Allah's ﷻ creation of man with the ability to use his hands for eating and drinking. Other creatures do not possess such ability.

According to Ibn Kathir's interpretation in the summarised version by As-Sabuni: In the above verse, Allah ﷻ informs the reader of His Honouring the Children of Adam by creating them in the best and perfect picture. A similar meaning is also expressed in: ﴿Verily, We have created mankind in the best picture﴾ (*At-Tin*:4). This means that man can walk on his feet, and eat with his hands. Whereas, other creatures walk on four limbs and eat directly with their mouths. Allah ﷻ also provided man with hearing, sight and heart which enable him to distinguish between the things which bring the good and things which bring the bad to his religious and worldly matters.

﴿And carried them on land and sea﴾ Reference here is made to the horses, mules, ships and boats which

Allah ﷻ created as a means of transportation for mankind, both on land and sea.
﴿And provided them with good things﴾ This part of the verse refers to the fruits, meat and milk, the variety of delicious and colourful food, beautiful landscapes, clothing of high quality and of different colour and fabric which mankind make for themselves and which they import from other countries.

﴿And preferred them greatly over many of those We created.﴾ This verse means that Allah ﷻ has preferred the children of Adam over animals and other creatures. This verse also implies the preference of man's race over the angels'. Abdullah Ibn Amru ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "The angels said to Allah ﷻ, "O our Lord! You have given the children of Adam the worldly life; they eat, drink and dress therein, while we proclaim Your Praise, but we do not eat, drink nor enjoy ourselves. Therefore, just as You have the worldly life available to them, make the Hereafter available to us." Allah ﷻ replied, "I will not treat the pious off-spring of what I have created with My Hands as that to which I said, be, and it was."[1] This tradition was

[1]Al-Haythami said in *Majma' Az-Zawa'id* [265]: "Tradition reported by At-Tabarani in *Al-Kabir* and *Al-Awsat*. The chain of transmitters

reported by At-Tabarani, transmitted by Abdurazzak, on the authority of Zayd Ibn Muslim as a *suspended* tradition (*Hadith Mawquf*), and Ibn Asakir on the authority of Anas Ibn Malik ﷺ as *Hadith Marfu'*.

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included Abdullah Ibn Khalid Al-Mahisi, who was a liar. Also the chain of transmitters in *Al-Awsat*, included Talha Ibn Zayd, also a liar."

-3-

ALLAH'S ﷻ BLESSING UPON MANKIND

The believer would -through the Qur'ān- recognise, the effects of Allah's ﷻ Mercy and Blessing on everything around him. There is, to begin with, Allah's ﷻ Blessing upon man as a person, which is the most magnificent and numerous:

- **The Blessing of Creation**: Had it not been for Allah's ﷻ Will and Bounty, man would have never existed and would have never been remembered. Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Has there come on man a while of time when he was a thing unremembered? We created man of a sperm-drop, a mingling, trying him; and We made him hearing, seeing.﴾ (*Al-Insān*:1-2)

- **The Blessing of Humankind**: Allah ﷻ created man in a complete form, appointed him as viceroy on earth, preferred him over most of His Creations: ﴿We have honoured the Children of Adam and carried them on land and sea, and provided them with good things, and preferred them greatly over many of those We created.﴾ (*Al-*

Isra':70), and shaped him in the best picture: ﴿Verily, We have created mankind in the best picture﴾ (*At-Tin*:4), ﴿And He shaped you, and shaped well.﴾ (*At-Taghābun*:3)

- **The Blessing of Perception and Knowledge:** Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Recite: And your Lord is the Most Generous, who taught by the Pen, taught Man, that which he knew not.﴾ (*Al-Alaq*: 3-5), ﴿And it is Allah who brought you forth, knowing nothing, from your mothers' wombs, and He appointed for you hearing and sight, and hearts, that haply so you will be thankful.﴾ The ears, eyes and heart are the instruments for the acquisition of knowledge.

- **The Blessing of Eloquence and Calligraphy:** Allah ﷻ says: ﴿The All-Merciful has taught the Qur'ān. He created man and He has taught Him the eloquence.﴾ **(***Ar-Rahmān*:1-4**),** ﴿...Who taught by the Pen...﴾ and ﴿Nūn. By the Pen, and what they inscribe.﴾ (*Al-Qalam*:1)

- **The Blessing of Provision**: Allah ﷻ says: ﴿O men, remember Allah's blessing upon you; is there any creator, apart from Allah, who provides for you out of heaven and earth?﴾ (*Fatir*:3), ﴿Say! Who provides for you out of heaven and earth? Say! Allah.﴾ (*Saba'*:24)

- **The Blessing of Faith and Guidance to the Right Path:** This blessing is for the believer only. Allah ﷻ says: ﴿And know that the Messenger of Allah is among you. If he obeyed you in much of the affair, you would suffer; but Allah has endeared to you belief, decking it fair in your hearts, and He has made detestable to you unbelief and ungodliness and disobedience. Those, they are the right-minded, by Allah's favour and blessing; Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.﴾ (*Al-Hujurat*:7-8), ﴿They count it as a favour to you that they have surrendered! Say: 'Do not count your surrendering as a favour to me; nay, but rather Allah confers upon you, in that He has guided you to belief, if it be that you are truthful.﴾ (*Al-Hujurat*:17)

- **The Blessing of Brotherhood and Love**: ﴿Remember Allah's Blessing upon you when you were enemies, and He brought your hearts together, so that by His Blessing you became brothers.﴾ (*Al-Imran*:103), ﴿And brought their hearts together. Had you expended all that is in the earth, you would not have been able to bring their hearts together; but Allah brought their hearts together; surely He is All-Mighty, All-Wise.﴾ (*Al-Anfal*: 63)

-4-

A MUSLIM PERSON WOULD NOT WRONG ANOTHER NOR LET ANYONE HARM HIM

Abdullah Ibn Umar ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "A Muslim person is the brother of another Muslim, so he should not wrong him, nor should he let anyone do so. Whoever fulfilled the needs of his brother, Allah ﷻ will fulfill his needs; whoever brought his (Muslim) brother out of a discomfort, Allah ﷻ will bring him out of the discomforts of the Day of Resurrection, and whoever does not expose a Muslim, Allah ﷻ will not expose him on the Day of Resurrection."[1]

Al-Hafidh said in *Al-Fath*: "In this tradition, reference is made to the brotherhood of Islam. Any concord between two things is given the label of brotherhood. This concord includes the free, the servant, the mature and immature person. *He should not wrong him nor should he let anyone do*

[1] Muslim: 58/2580

so means that it is unlawful that a Muslim person wrongs another, or should let anyone harm him. Rather, he should support and defend him, and this support may either be compulsory or optional, according to circumstances."

On the authority of Salim, At-Tabarani added: "A Muslim person should not desert his Muslim brother in adversity."

Whoever does not expose a Muslim means that a Muslim should not expose his Muslim brother's faults to people. However, he should condemn his faults and expose him if he advises him, but he does not abstain from whatever disobedient act he is committing.

Allah will not expose him on the Day of Resurrection: According to At-Tirmidhi, as narrated by Abū Hurayra, "Allah ﷻ will not expose him both this life and the hereafter."

Generally, the tradition urges support and good companionship, and indicates that the components of the reward in the Hereafter will be similar to those of any good act in this life; and whoever takes an oath that a person is his brother and intends the Muslim brotherhood, should not break his oath.

Al-Mubarkafuri said in *Tuhfat Al-Ahudi*: "In the tradition narrated by Ibn Umar, *Whoever does not expose a Muslim* refers to a physical defect or wrongdoings. He should not expose them to people behind his back. This concerns a person who is known to be uncorrupt. However, in case he is corrupt, he should condemn his wrongdoing, if he can, but if he cannot, then he should report him to the ruler.

-5-

RELIEVING A MUSLIM IN DISCOMFORT

Abu Hurayra ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "He who relieves a brother from one of the discomforts of this life, Allah ﷻ will relieve him from one of the discomforts of the Day of Judgment. He who covers up the wrong doing of a Muslim, Allah ﷻ will cover up his wrongdoings in this life and in the Hereafter. He who eases up a hardship, Allah ﷻ will ease up his hardship in this life and the Hereafter. Allah ﷻ will support a servant so long as the servant supports his brother. He who treads a path in search of knowledge, Allah ﷻ will make that path easy, leading him to the path of Paradise. Not a group of people gather in one of the houses of Allah (mosques), recite the Book of Allah and learn and teach the Qur'an (among themselves), but that tranquility will descend upon them, mercy will cover them, the angels will surround them and Allah ﷻ will mention them in the presence of those near Him. He who is slow-paced in doing good deeds, his long pedigree does not make him go ahead."[1]

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[1] Muslim: 38/2699 and At-Tirmidi [2945].

Al-Mubarkafuri said in *Tuhfat Al-Ahudi*: "(*man naffasa*=relieves) is derived from *at-tanfis* (relief) meaning to ease up his discomfort."

At-Tayyibi said: "Easing up a discomfort is similar to unblocking someone's airways. It is derived from the expression, '*anta fi nafasin*', meaning 'you are at ease.' It is as if the discomfort has blocked the airways. Therefore, if a Muslim relieves his brother of a discomfort, the airways are opened.' *Brother* in this context refers to the *brotherhood of faith*."

Given that all creatures are Allah's ﷻ dependents and that relieving a discomfort is a good act, then Allah's ﷻ recompense will conform to such an act, as the verse suggests: ﴿Shall the recompense of goodness be other than goodness?﴾ (*Ar-Rahmān*: 63)

"He who conceals the wrongdoings of a Muslim." This means that if one does not expose a Muslim's misdeeds, and provides clothing for him to cover his forbidden parts, Allah ﷻ will conceal his faults and privacy."

According to An-Nawawi, the type of concealment referred to in the above tradition concerns those who are known to be uncorrupt. However, if one is notorious for disobedience of Allah ﷻ, then he should be reported to the ruler if there are grounds to believe that his report would not have any negative outcome. This is because covering up for the misdeeds he commits might incite him to persist in committing them. Further, if one sees a Muslim in the act of committing a wrong, he should immediately prevent him from committing it if he is able to do so, without delay. However, if he is unable to do so, then he should report it to the ruler if he thinks that his move would not have any negative outcome.

'He who eases up a hardship.' If a poor person, whether a believer or non-believer, owes you money, you should give him sufficient time to pay it back or waive some, or all of it. Allah's ﷻ recompense for such act will be as equal.

'Allah ﷻ will support a servant so long as the servant supports his brother.' As long as a servant fulfills the needs of his brother, Allah ﷻ will fulfill his needs.

Al-Manawi said in *Faydh Al-Qadir fi Sharh Al-Jami' As-Saghir*: "If one covers up the faults of his Muslim brother, by not exposing what would affect his religion, dignity, wealth and family; Allah ﷻ will not expose his sins and defects before people on the Day of judgment, and will ease up his trial and discard his punishment. This is because Allah ﷻ is the All-Modest and All-Generous; and not exposing someone else's privacy is part of modesty and generosity.

One day Othman Ibn Affan was called up to deal with a people accused of wrongdoing, but he missed them. As a result, he freed a slave in gratitude to Allah ﷻ, lest he should have been responsible for a Muslim's degradation.

-6-

INJUSTICE IS DARKNESS

Abdullah Ibn Umar ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "Injustice will be a darkness on the Day of Judgment."[1]

Jabir Ibn Abdullah ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "Ward off injustice, for injustice will be a darkness on the Day of judgment, and ward off avarice, for avarice destroyed nations before you. It goaded them into killing each other and into making lawful what was unlawful for them."[2]

Abu Dharr ﷺ reported: "The prophet ﷺ quoted Allah ﷻ (through Gabriel ﷺ) as saying: "My servants, I have made injustice unlawful for Me and unlawful for you, so do not commit injustice against one another. My servants, all of you are liable to err except one whom I guide on the right path, so seek right guidance from Me so that I may direct you to

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[1]Al-Bukhari [2315]
[2]Muslim [56/2578]

the right path. O My servants, all of you are hungry (need food) except the one whom I feed, so beg food from Me, so that I may give it to you. O My servants, all of you are naked (need clothes) except the one whom I provide with garments, so beg clothes from Me, so that I may clothe you. O My servants, you commit a wrong night and day and I am there to pardon your sins, so beg pardon from Me so that I may grant you pardon. O My servants, even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, even if the whole of the human race, and that of the *Jinns*, become (equally) God-conscious like the heart of a single person amongst you, nothing will add to My Power. O My servants, even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, the whole human race, and that of the *Jinns* too become in unison the most wicked (all beating) like the heart of a single person, it will cause no loss of My Power. O My servants, even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, the whole human race, and that of *Jinns* also, all stand in one place and you ask Me and I confer upon every person what he asks for, it will not in any way cause any loss to Me (even less) than that which is caused to the ocean by dipping a needle in it. My servants, these deeds of yours, which I am recording for you, I shall reward you for them. So he who finds good should praise Allah and he who does not find it should not blame

anyone but himself."[1] Sa'id said that whenever Abu Idris Al-Khawlani narrated this tradition, he would kneel down.

In another narration, the tradition says: "I have made injustice unlawful for Me and for My Servants, therefore; do not treat each other unjustly."

Anas ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "Support your brother (in Islam) whether as a wrongdoer or as a wronged." The companions told the prophet ﷺ, "Fine, we understand how to support him if he has been wronged. But, how are we to support him as an unjust person?" The prophet ﷺ replied, "By not letting him commit injustice. Hence, that is your support to him."[2]

Qays reported, "After praising Allah ﷻ, Abu Bakr ﷺ said, "O people! You recite the following verse and you do not put it into its context, ﴿O believers, look after your own souls. He who is astray cannot hurt you, if you are rightly guided.﴾ (*Al-Ma'ida*: 105) We heard the prophet ﷺ say: "When people

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[1]Muslim [55/2577]
[2]At-Tirmidi [2255]; tradition classed by Al-Albani as authentic.

see an unjust person and do not prevent him from doing so, Allah ﷻ will soon punish them all," and "If acts of disobedience are done among any people, and they do not change them, though they are able to do so, Allah ﷻ will soon punish them all."[3]

Abdullah Ibn Amru ﷺ reported: "I heard the prophet ﷺ say, "If you see my people afraid to tell a wrongdoer, 'You are a wrongdoer, then they would be neglected and left to commit sins.'"[4]

Al-Bara' Ibn Azib ﷺ reported: "A countryman asked the prophet ﷺ, "O Allah's Messenger! Teach me a deed which will take me to Paradise? Save a slave and free a slave." "Are not they the same thing?" The prophet ﷺ replied, "No. Saving a slave is when you do it individually, and freeing a slave is when you contribute to it. Then, donate some land to others to be used for growing crops, a sheep to be

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[1]Abu Dawud [4338]; tradition classed by Al-Albani as authentic.

[2]Ahmad [2/163]. According to Al-Arna'ut, the chain of transmission of this tradition is weak and its narrators fulfilled the requirement for reporting authentic traditions. However, Abu Az-Zubayr who was Mohamed Ibn Muslim did not hear from Abdullah Ibn Amru what Abu Hatim stated in *Al-Marasil* [p:154].

milked, and *al-fay'* [1] to a wrongdoer kinsman; but if you cannot do that, then provide food for the hungry and water for the thirsty, enjoin the good and prevent people from committing sins. But if you cannot do that, then watch your language, except from what appears to be good."[2]

Abu Thabit ﷺ reported: "A man entered *Masjid Dimashq* and said, "O Allah, break my loneliness, have mercy for my estrangement and provide me with a pious companion." When Abu Ad-Darda' heard him, he approached him and said, "If you are truthful, then I am happier than you with what you have said. I heard the prophet ﷺ say, "﴿But of them some wrong themselves.﴾ (*Fatir*:32), meaning, 'a person is considered a wrongdoer for the state he is in; that is, grief and sorrow', ﴿Some of them are lukewarm﴾; those will be ﴿called to account with an easy reckoning﴾ (*Al-Inshiqaq*:8) and ﴿some are outstrippers in good works by the Leave of Allah﴾, meaning, 'they will be admitted into Paradise without reckoning.'"[3]

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[1] What is obtained from the enemies after laying down arms (without fighting).

[2] Ahmad [4/299]. According to Al-Arna'ut, the chain of transmission of this tradition is authentic and its transmitters fulfilled the requirements set up for transmitting authentic traditions.

[3] Ahmad [5/194]. According to Al-Arna'ut, the chain of transmission of this tradition is weak.

Al-Bara' ﷺ reported: "The prophet ﷺ commanded us to do seven deeds and ward off seven deeds. "He commanded us to accompany a funeral procession, visit the sick, respond to an invitation, support a Muslim who has been wronged, honour an oath, greet back, and bless a sneezer (by saying to him: *arhamakallah*). And he ﷺ forbade us to use silver utensils and dishes, wear golden rings, silk garments, brocade (pure silk cloth), and *qissi* and *istabraq* (two kinds of silk cloths)."[4]

Ibn Abbas ﷺ reported: "When the prophet ﷺ sent Mu'ad Ibn Jabal to Yemen, he told him, "When you reach Yemen, you will find a people of Scripture there. Invite them to testify that there is no god but Allah Alone and that Muhammad is His Messenger. If they obey, then inform them that Allah ﷻ has prescribed five prayers a day. If they obey, then inform then that Allah ﷻ prescribed a compulsory donation (*Zakat*), to be taken from the rich among them and be donated to the poor among them. If they obey, then be cautious not to take of their best property (as *Zakat*), and fear the curse of a person

[1] Al-Bukhari [1182].

who has been wronged, for there is no screen between his curse and Allah ﷻ."[1]

Zayd Ibn Aslam ﷺ quoted his father ﷺ as saying: "Umar Ibn Al-Khattab appointed a freed slave of his, called Hunay, manager of the *Hima* (i.e. a pasture devoted for grazing the animals of reserved for *Zakat* or other specified animals). He said to him, "O Hunay! Do not wrong Muslims and ward off their curse (invocations against you) for the invocation of the one who has been wronged is fulfilled (by Allah); and allow the shepherd having a few camels and those having a few sheep (to graze their animals), and take care not to allow the livestock of Abdur-Rahman Ibn Awf and the livestock of Othman Ibn Affan, for if their livestock should perish, then they have their farms and gardens, while those who own a few camels and those who own a few sheep, if their livestock should perish, would bring their dependents to me and appeal for help saying, 'O chief of the believers! O chief of the believers!' Would I then neglect them? (No, of course). So, I find it easier to let them have water and grass rather than to give them gold and silver (from the Muslims' treasury). By Allah, these people think that I have been unjust to them. This is

[1]Al-Bukhari [1425]

their land, and during the pre-Islamic period, they fought for it and they embraced Islam (willingly) while it was in their possession. By Him in Whose Hand my life is! Were it not for the animals (in my custody) which I give to be ridden for striving in Allah's cause, I would not have turned even a span of their land into a Hima."[1]

Abdullah Ibn Sarjis ﷺ reported: "Whenever the prophet ﷺ wanted to set out for a journey, he would seek refuge in Allah ﷻ from the hardship of traveling, from a distressing scene upon returning home, from the change of affairs from good to bad, from the invocation of a wronged person, and from finding the family and property in an unpleasant state."[2]

Abu Hurayra ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "Three invocations are undoubtedly granted; the invocation of the father, traveller and oppressed."[3]

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[1]Al-Bukhari [2894]
[2]Al-Bukhari [1343]

[3]Abu Daud [1536]. Tradition was classed by Al-Albani as authentic.

Abu Hurayra ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "Three types of people whose invocations are not rejected; the just leader, fasting person, and a wronged person. Allah ﷻ would raise the latter's invocation over the clouds, where the gates of heavens are opened for it, and say, "By My Honour, I shall support you, though after a while."[1]

Al-Bara' ﷺ reported: "The prophet ﷺ passed by a group of *Al-Ansar* sitting at the side of the road, and said, "If you have to (sitting at the side of the road), then return a greeting, support a wronged person, and direct people to the right way."[2]

Abdullah Ibn Sarjis ﷺ reported: "Whenever the prophet ﷺ set out on a journey, he would say, "O Allah, You are the Companion in this journey and the representative in the family. O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the hardship of traveling, from a distressing scene upon returning home. O Allah, accompany us in our journey and represent us in the family, and I seek refuge in You from the change of

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[1]At-Tirmidi [2526]. Tradition classed by Al-Albani as authentic.
[2]At-Tirmidi [2726]. The chain of transmission of this tradition was classed by Al-Albani as authentic.

affairs from good to bad, from the invocation of a wronged person, and from finding the family and property in an unpleasant state."[1]

Abu Hurayra ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "O children of Adam, do your deeds as if you were seen and count yourselves among the dead, and beware the invocation of a wronged person."[2]

Abu Hurayra ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "The invocation of a wronged person will be granted, even if he were immoral; as for his immorality, it will be held against him and he will be judged for it."[6]

Anas Ibn Malik ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "Fear the invocation of a wronged person, even if he

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[1]At-Tirmidi [3439]. Tradition classed by Al-Albani as authentic.
[2]Reported by Imam Ahmad in *Al-Musnad* [2/343]
[6] Reported by Imam Ahmad in *Al-Musnad* [2/367]

were a disbeliever; for there is no screen between it and Allah ﷻ."[1]

Abu Ash-Shammakh Al-Azadi quoted one of his cousins who was one of the companions of the prophet ﷺ, as saying: "I went to Mu'awiyya and said to him, "I heard the prophet ﷺ say, "Whoever has been appointed to rule over people, and shuts his door in the face of the request of the needy and a wronged person, Allah ﷻ will shut his door of mercy in his face in time of his need poverty."[2]

Al-Bara' ﷺ reported: "The prophet ﷺ passed by a group of people sitting at the side of the road, and said, "If you have to (sitting at the side of the road), then direct people to the right way, return a greeting, and save a wronged person. Affan ﷺ said, 'Support'."[3]

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[1] Reported by Imam Ahmad in *Al-Musnad* [2/153]
[2] Reported by Imam Ahmad in *Al-Musnad* [3/480]
[3] Reported by Imam Ahmad in *Al-Musnad* [4/291]

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THE MOST SERIOUS FORM OF INJUSTICE

Abdullah Ibn Ma'ud ﷺ reported: "When the verse ﴿Those who believe and do not clock their faith in wrongdoing﴾ (*Al-An'am*:82), the companions of the prophet ﷺ wondered, "Who amongst us has not committed a wrong?" Then, the verse ﴿Ascribing a partner to Allah is such a serious wrong.﴾ (*Luqman*:13)".[1]

In another wording: "When the verse ﴿Those who believe and do not clock their faith in wrongdoing﴾ (*Al-An'am*:82), the companions asked the prophet ﷺ, "O Allah's Messenger! Who amongst us has not committed a wrong?" The prophet ﷺ said, "It is not what you think. The wrong in this context refers to ascribing a partner to Allah ﷻ. Have not you heard the piece of advice Luqman gave to his son ﴿O my dear son, do not ascribe partner to Allah, for ascribing a partner to Allah is such a serious wrong.﴾ (*Luqman*:13)"[2]

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[1]Al-Bukhari [32] and Muslim [124/197]
[2]Al-Bukhari [3181]

In another wording: "When the verse ﴿Those who believe and do not clock their faith in wrongdoing﴾ (*Al-An'am*:82), it was hard for them and wondered, "Who amongst us has not committed a wrong?" The prophet ﷺ said, "It is not what you think. It is what Luqman told his son ﴿O my dear son, do not ascribe partner to Allah, for ascribing a partner to Allah is such a serious wrong.﴾ (*Luqman*:13)

Al-Hafidh said in *Al-Fath*: "Each of the above narrations clarifies the other, meaning that when it was hard for the companions to bear the requirements of the verse, Allah ﷻ revealed ﴿Ascribing a partner to Allah is such a serious wrong.﴾.

According to An-Nawawi, "The prophet ﷺ knew that the *wrong* referred to in the verse is associating a partner with Allah in worship, and, therefore; informed the companions that it was not what they thought. Rather, the wrong intended in the verse is what Luqman advised his son to avert. The companions understood the word *wrong* in the general sense; that is to say, what immediately came to their minds when they heard the word, meanings such as, not putting things in the right order, and thus, contradicting the Islamic Law; and that were hard for them. Consequently, the prophet ﷺ

clarified for them the meaning intended in the verse."

According to Al-Khattabi, "It was hard for them because, they understood the word *wrong* in terms of its surface meaning which is, usurping people's rights and committing wrong. In other words, they believed that *wrong* referred this surface meaning only. However, *wrong* refers to the act of not putting things in their right order, and whoever worships other than Allah ﷻ, is the most wronged. Further, this tradition also suggests that disobedient or wrongful acts are not indicative of disbelief, and Allah ﷻ knows best.

In his interpretation of the tradition quoted from the prophet ﷺ by Abdullah Ibn Umar ﷺ (Injustice will be a darkness on the Day of Judgment), Al-Jawzi said, "wrongdoing consists of two disobedient acts: taking someone's wealth wrongfully and disobeying Allah ﷻ in challenging way; with each being more serious than the other; and a wrong is often inflicted on the weak who cannot win. In fact, a wrong originates in the darkness of heart, for if it were enlightened with the light of guidance, it will not do wrong. And while the fearful strive with the light resulting from the fear of Allah ﷻ, the wrongdoer or

unjust is engulfed in the darkness of injustice, which will not avail him of anything."

The present work by Imam Muhammad Mutwali Ash-Sha'rawi explores some of the issues of injustice and the unjust; which I commented upon and traced the transmitters of different traditions. I also added relevant literature by other scholars who explored the same issue and quoted any relevant tradition. May Allah make this attempt beneficial to the reader, its author and publisher.

Abdellah Hajjaj
August 2001

INJUSTICE AND THE UNJUST

SHEIKH IMAM MUHAMMAD MUTWALLI SHA'RAWI

INJUSTICE

Allah ﷻ says: ﴿We destroyed the generations before you when they did evil, and their Messengers came to them with the clear signs, but they would not believe; so We recompense the people of the sinners.﴾

Beware any move in which you intend to do wrong to Muhammad ﷺ, for you will not get anything from him, and Allah ﷻ will make His Light prevail. Therefore, your actions are not novel compared to those of the peoples before you.

﴿Generations﴾ may either refer to people whose lifetime is included within a period of one hundred years, or to a group of people who share something in common, no matter how long it takes.

The verse also raises the following question: Would these generations have believed if they had been given more chance? The answer is 'No.' Allah ﷻ has an eternal knowledge of what happened and will happen, and knows the state in which affairs take place, whether in an obligatory or optional manner.

Take this example from real life. If a person wishes to build a house, his building will vary according to

his financial ability. A poor person, for instance, would want to build a two bed-roomed house and would, accordingly, have a plan for two rooms. The average person would go to an architect for a plan according to his ability. A rich person would call the architect for a plan for the type of house he wishes to build. In turn, the architect would draw a design sample for the building which gives details of what the house would look like, even the colour of windows, doors and rooms.

By the same token, before creating the universe, Allah ﷻ had a design for it. Hence, this is Allah's Ability, and the creation of the universe took place according to what Allah ﷻ had first designed. Therefore, even if the disbeliever creature had the freedom of choice, Allah ﷻ would know it. Allah ﷻ knows the workings of obligatory duties and what He ﷻ prescribed for His creations; that is to say, issues in which they have no choice. As regards the optional issues, Allah ﷻ has given His creations the freedom of choice, and knowing in advance what they would do, He ﷻ prescribed the issue according to what He knew.

However do not think that by so doing, Allah ﷻ wanted to oblige you. On the contrary, Allah ﷻ knew that you would have the choice, and therefore,

knew in advance who would wrong himself. As an example of this pre-knowledge, bygone generations which He ﷻ destroyed did not believe.

Wrongdoing in the above verse means: transferring somebody's right to another person. The rights granted by Allah ﷻ to mankind may be wronged. However, the highest degree of wrongdoing is polytheism (ascribing partners to Allah ﷻ in worship), as the verse (*Luqman*:13) indicates; and when one wrongs himself, he ascribes a partner to Allah ﷻ. Hence, this is absolute wrongdoing. In this respect, Allah ﷻ says, ﴿Ascribing partners to Allah is a serious wrong.﴾

People have already wronged themselves with respect to the issue of *Aqida* or to their own rights, as Allah ﷻ says: ﴿But people wronged their selves.﴾ (*Yunus*:44)
One may be both a wrongdoer and wronged at the same time. This is to say that man has several muses, among which there are the muses of innate faith and temporal self-interest. If the muse of temporal self-interest triumphs, the reproachful soul intervenes to redress the balance. However, if the soul were devilish, it demands the fulfillment of pleasure, because it is a soul that incites man to do evil. But, if it complies with Allah's ﷻ Law and

does what Allah ﷻ commands, then it is a peaceful soul. The person who wrongs himself is the one who pursues the desires of his soul, giving it a temporal enjoyment, and therefore, expects a deferred misery. Therefore, by doing so, he has wronged himself.

Allah ﷻ is the All-Knower, Who knows the affairs according to what they are, rather than according to what He ﷻ obliges His creation to. Therefore, if His Knowledge were according to what He ﷻ obliges His creation to, then there will be no freedom of choice. For example, if you want to go out with your wife, and your children are very young, then you would lock them in after telling them: Your meal is in the fridge: meat, fish, cheese and olives. After going out, you would tell your wife, 'Our children would only eat cheese and olives because, they would find it an easy meal, and if there was only cheese in the fridge, I would not have listed the different foods in the fridge; and cheese would then be obligatory because they would have no choice.' Your judgment is based on your children's past behaviour, and their choice emanated from what they have been used to, although they have the freedom of choice. And when you come back, you would find out that your children would act exactly as you have prophesied,

despite the fact that you have given them the freedom of choice.

A similar example is expressed in the Qur'ān:﴿Perish the hands of Abu Lahab, and perish he! His wealth avails him not, neither what he has earned; he shall roast at a flaming fire.﴾ (*Al-Masad*:1-3) This verse suggests Allah's ﷻ judgment that Abu Lahab will die as a believer, just like any other believers, though many a disbeliever have embraced Islam. Did not Umar, Ikrima Ibn Abu Jahl, Amru Ibn Al-Aas, Khalid Ibn Al-Walid become Muslims? So what prevented Abu Lahab from embracing Islam, too? No! He did not, and the prophet ﷺ knew from his Lord ﷻ that he would not embrace Islam, nor was it possible for him to declare his Islam, and thus, refuting the statement of the Qur'ān. This is because Allah ﷻ knew in advance Abu Lahab's character.

﴿So We recompense the people of the sinners.﴾ In this part of the verse, ﴿So﴾ implies that the recompense for a wrong will be similar to that of peoples before you. This is because the issues in the universe are one, and the issue of faith has existed since the time Messengers started to come, and will continue until the end of this life.

ALLAH ﷻ WILL NOT WRONG AS LITTLE AS THE WEIGHT OF AN ATOM

﴿That, for what your hands have forwarded, and for that Allah is never *Zallam* (unjust) unto His servants.﴾ (*Al-Imran*:182)

Grammatically, *Zallam* is derived from the grammatical root construction *fa'aal*, used in Arabic discourse in general and the Qur'ān in particular for emphasis. Note that there is a difference in meaning between the two constructions *Zallam* and *Zalim*. For instance, when you say that a person is not *Zallam*, it is the character of emphatical *Zulm* that is nullified, but such a person may still be *Zalim*. This is to say that a person may only be *Zalim* without being *Zallam*. Therefore, that a person is not *Zallam* only nullifies the character of emphatical *Zulm*, but does not invalidate the character of *Zulm* (injustice), in general, for a person may still be *Zalim*.

Surprisingly, some Orientalists claimed that some of the verses of the Qur'ān contradict each other. For instance, in the verse ﴿...and for that Allah is never *Zallam* (unjust)﴾, Allah ﷻ eliminates the character

of emphatical *Zulm*, but this does not necessarily mean an elimination of *Zulm*. In the following verse, ﴿Allah will not wrong as little as the weight of an atom﴾ (*An-Nisa'*:40), Allah ﷻ eliminates both the characters of emphasis and *Zulm*, in general; and this according to some Orientalists is a contradiction. In response, we ask the following question: Does eliminating the character of emphatical injustice necessarily mean that the character of injustice still exist? The answer is 'no.' Eliminating the character of emphatical injustice does not nullify the character of *Zulm* in general, but not necessarily. With the foregoing, the verse ﴿Allah will not wrong as little as the weight of an atom﴾ (*An-Nisa'*:40) nullifies the principle of injustice, and ﴿...and for that Allah is never *Zallam* (unjust) unto His servants.﴾ (*Al-Imran*:182) nullifies the principle of emphasis; and the verses of the Qur'ān clarify one another.

If it is said, for example, that Allah ﷻ nullifies the principle of emphasis and this affirms the existence of hat the character of *Zulm*, we respond in the following manner: Nullifying the character of emphasis does not necessarily affirm the existence of the character of *Zulm*, nor prevents it from existing. And if another verse were to nullify the

character of *Zulm*, then Allah ﷻ is neither *Zallam* nor *Zalim*.

THE PROPHET ﷺ WAS BEYOND COMMITTING AN ACT INJUSTICE

Azu-Zubayr Ibn Al-Awwam ﷺ, one of the ten companions who were promised Paradise, and also the prophet's ﷺ cousin, was in dispute with one of *Al-Ansar* (Supporters), over the irrigation of a land they had in *Al-Harra* (a place near Al-Madina). They took their dispute for settlement to the prophet ﷺ, who said to Az-Zubayr, "Water your land, then let the water flow to your neighbour (i.e. to the land of the man from *Al-Ansar*)."[1]

It appears that the prophet's ﷺ judgment was in favour of his cousin, but it was a fair judgment, because Az-Zubayr's land was at the top, the man's at the bottom; and it would be wrong to judge in favour of the man, because people would think that the prophet ﷺ was unfair to his relative to please others. On the contrary, the prophet ﷺ was beyond passing an unfair judgment against his cousin to earn the fame of justice among people, as some people would do. For example, if one is called to resolve a dispute between his son and a stranger, he would automatically judge in favour of the stranger,

[1]Al-Bukhari in *Fath Al-Bari*, 2359, Muslim [129/2357], Abu Dawud [336], At-Tirmidi [1363], on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Az-Zubayr.

even though the latter is in the wrong. Our message to this type of people is: "Do not be unjust in certain situations to earn the fame of justice among people. There is a courage which you should possess; that of being just in resolving disputes and passing judgments. This courage requires that you judge with truth, even though in favour of yourself.

The man from *Al-Ansar* was not satisfied with the prophet's ﷺ judgment which was in favour of his cousin. He said to the prophet ﷺ, "Because he is your cousin." The prophet's ﷺ face was red with anger, and he said to Az-Zubayr, "Water your land, then withhold the water until it fills the land up to the walls." Many people who look for defects in Islam would think from this incident that the prophet ﷺ judged in favour of his cousin first to have his land watered, then modified the judgment so that the man from *Al-Ansar* would, too, have his land watered. Those people do not understand that Az-Zubayr's land was at the top and the man's was at the bottom, and usually, at a stream the fertile land is at the bottom of the stream rather than at its top. Furthermore, although the water accumulates at the top, it flows down to the lower land, and it would be unfair to the higher land to water the lower land first. Therefore, the first judgment was based on ease and bounty on the part of Az-Zubayr,

and the second (after the man was not satisfied) was based on justice.

INJUSTICE TO THE SELF

One is unjust to his self by harbouring a temporal pleasure for it, and thus; causing it a permanent misery. As a result, man finds himself in a strange situation, because he has embroiled his self in an eternal misery through an ephemeral pleasure. Injustice to the self is one of the most distressing forms of injustice, and is there any person with a sound mind who disobeys Allah ﷻ by not executing His commands and by committing the forbidden?

A person with a sound mind would not do that, because he knows that, apparently, there is a fulfillment of a desire, but, deeply, there is an involvement of the self in misery. For example, sleeping without observing prayers means an apparent fulfillment of a sleeping desire for his self, but means an isolation of the self from Allah ﷻ. Similarly, if one drinks alcohol, he would think that he has fulfilled a desire for his self; whereas, in reality, he has wronged his self by involving it in an enormous misery. When one wrongs his self, he does feel secure towards it.

Injustice entails the involvement of two parties: the unjust and one to whom injustice has been done. But in the case of being unjust to the self, who is the

unjust? And who is the party to which injustice has been done?

The self refers to the presence of soul in matter, and it is this union which gives the soul the character of peacefulness, the character of evildoing, or the character of reproach. The convergence of soul and matter produces the human soul. Prior to this convergence, the soul would, by nature, be good, and the substance is subdued according to the will of its subduer. I am saying this so that nobody would argue that there is a materialistic life and a spiritual life, and that the materialistic life is evil and the spiritual life is good. Arguably, the matter is, generally, good, obedient, subjugated, worshipping and glorifying; and so is the soul. Corruption arises when the soul meets with the matter. At this interaction, there comes the principle of choice. A mature person (legally responsible for his actions) would be told: "Are you satisfied with Allah's ﷻ Law? Or are you going to vacillate between the reproachful soul and satisfaction? Or are you going to indulge in disobedience of Allah ﷻ and have an evil soul?" This variation comes at the convergence of soul and matter.

Which does wrong when the soul and matter meet? It is desire which wrongs the soul in an act of disobedience. This is to say that the wrongdoer fulfils a desire for his soul by committing a sin, but, in reality, he burdens his soul. In this respect, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿If, when they wronged themselves...﴾ (*An-Nisa'*:64). There is a difference between committing a wrong in order to fulfill a desire for one's self committing a wrong in order to fulfill a desire for someone else's self. In this context, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Who, when they commit an indecency or wrong themselves, remember Allah, and pray forgiveness for their sins – and who shall forgive sins but Allah?﴾ (*Al-Imran*:135).

It appears from this verse that committing an act of indecency is something, and wronging the self is a different matter. Committing an act of indecency may be a momentary enjoyment for the soul. However, one who has wronged his self for the sake of fulfilling someone else's desire, cannot be said to have brought enjoyment to his self; he has wronged it. He has not given his self the short-lived desire in this life nor protected it from the torment of the Hereafter. Perjury (*shahadat Az-Zur*), for example, is case in point. A perjurer (witnessing in favour or against someone) would earn nothing, save wronging his self. Observe how the following

tradition condemns such act: "The worst amongst you is he who sells his religion in return for the enjoyment of worldly life, and worst still is he who sells his religion for the sake of someone else's worldly life." Hence, this is the worst form of wronging the self, and those who do it are those whose striving goes astray in the present life, while they think that they are working good deeds.[1]

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[1]Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Say: "Shall We tell you who will be the greatest losers in their works? Those whose striving goes astray in the present life, while they think that they are working good deeds.﴾ (*Al-Kahf*:103) Mus'ab reported: "I asked Sa'd Ibn Abu Waqas ﷺ whether the greatest losers referred in the above verse are *Al-Hururiyya*." He said, no. They are the Jews and Christians. As for the Jews they did not believe Muhammad ﷺ,, the Christians did not believe in Paradise, saying, 'There is no food nor drink therein. *Al-Hururiyya* are those who break the Covenant of Allah after its solemn binding." Sa'd ﷺ used to label them *Al-Fasiqun*. According to Ali ﷺ, Ad-Dahhak and others, the above verse includes *Al-Hururiyya*, as well as the Jews , Christians and other sects. It does not specifically concerns one group or the other. Rather, it is general. Furthermore, the verse is Makkan and was revealed before the address directed to the Jews and Christians and before the emergence of *Al-Kharijites*. It is a general verse that concerns every servant of Allah ﷻ who acts wrongfully and thinks that he works good deeds, whilst his deeds are rejected, as Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Faces on that day humbled, labouring, toilworn, roasting at a scorching fire.﴾ (*Al-Ghashiyya*:2-4), ﴿We shall advance upon what work they have done, and make it a scattered dust.﴾ (*Al-Furqan*:23), and ﴿And as for the unbelievers, their works are as a mirage in a spacious plain which the man athirst supposes to be water, till, when he comes to it, he finds it is nothing.﴾ (*An-Nur*:39). As for the above verse: (*Al-Kahf*:104), it means that the greatest losers are those who perform deeds illegally and believe that their deeds are appropriate and that they are acceptable and beloved.

Generally, *Zulm* is like *Al-Jawr* (oppression): a form of aggression, coercion, subjugation or devaluation of importance. The antonym of *Zulm* is *Al-Insaf* (justice), just as the antonym of *Al-Jawr* (oppression) is *Al-'Adl* (justice). *Az-Zulm* is, therefore, injustice, and when one does injustice to his self, he would, then, be wronged by his self and unjust towards it. Wronging one's self is the worst forms of injustice. The soul which Allah ﷻ honoured and created deserves to be guarded by man, who should achieve what Allah ﷻ wants from it, and prevent any relentless desire which incurs Allah's ﷻ wrath, from reaching it. Allah ﷻ says concerning wronging the self: ﴿Who, when they commit an indecency or wrong themselves, remember Allah, and pray forgiveness for their sins – and who shall forgive sins but Allah? And do not preserve in the things they did and that wittingly. Those, their recompense is forgiveness from their Lord, and gardens beneath which rivers flow, therein dwelling forever; and how excellent is the wage of those who labour.﴾ (*Al-Imran*:135-6).

This verse outlines the difference between an act of indecency and doing injustice to the self. The former consists of a wrongdoing through which the doer fulfils a desire, an interest or causes harm to the society. The latter is another form of evil deeds.

Wronging the self means selling one's religion for the sake of someone else's enjoyment of worldly life. He who does so does not fulfill any interest for his self, whether distant or immediate. Examples of the former are referred to in the following tradition: "The worst of people are those who sell his religion in return for the enjoyment of worldly life." Those are the people who commit acts of indecency. Examples of the latter are referred to in the second part of the same tradition: "Worst still are those who have sold their religion for the sake of someone else's enjoyment of worldly life." For both categories, Allah ﷻ provided the means of rescue: remembering Allah ﷻ, asking Him for forgiveness, and abstinence from reverting to committing acts of indecency or wronging the self, until He ﷻ forgives them and admit them into Paradise. This is because Allah ﷻ does not wrong anyone, ﴿But people wrong their selves.﴾ (*Yunus*:44). But, why? This is because they wrong their selves in what remains useful and fall hostages of what is temporal.

In this context, man may be both a wrongdoer and wronged at the same time. This is because people wrong their selves, and the human soul possesses the muses of immediate or temporal interest and muses of desires and fantasies; which compete with one another. If you have done wrong and

reproached your self and performed a good deed, then you are a person with a reproachful soul. If your soul is used to doing evil and indulging in desires, then you are a person with an evil soul. If your soul succumbs to Allah ﷻ, then you are a person with a peaceful soul.

It is the evil soul which has violated people's rights and wronged them, and it, at the same time, wronged itself by giving it a temporal enjoyment and goading it into a permanent wretchedness.

LEANING ON THE WRONGDOER IS FORBIDDEN

Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Do not lean on the wrongdoers.﴾ (*Hud*:113) In this verse, *leaning on* means inclination, comfort, friendliness and mercy. Allah ﷻ forbids such an act, because if you incline towards the wrongdoer and believed in him, he would involve you with him. But if you keep away from him and do not lean on him, he would feel that you lean on a strong base. Therefore, do not lean on him until he understands that you have confidence in Allah ﷻ and His Ability to take on the wrongdoer. At that time, he would feel weakened. One of the evils of the present life is leaning on the wrongdoers and helping them in their wrongdoing. He who does so does not notice that Allah ﷻ is capable to cause the collapse of the wrongdoer and of all his tyranny and power.

Why does Allah ﷻ warn us not to lean on the wrongdoer? This is because we did not confront him. Rather, we have assisted him in his wrongdoing, and if he had been challenged in the first time he has committed an act of injustice, he would have desisted from his wrongdoing. What encouraged him was people's assistance to him, out of fear, and he did not find anyone who can

challenge him. One of the highest degrees of supporting the wrongdoer is finding someone who beautifies his wrongdoing to people. Such beautification helps to propagate injustice. Leaning on the wrongdoer has several forms, and any prevalent injustice in the world today was due to people's assistance to the wrongdoer and beautification of his deeds; and had they challenged him from the very beginning, his injustice would not have prevailed.

Allah ﷻ proceeds to say: ﴿You have no protectors apart from Allah.﴾ (*Hud*:113), meaning that there is no one who can protect you, except Allah ﷻ. Therefore, do not lean on those who do wrong nor seek their assistance. For Allah ﷻ is your only helper and supporter, therefore, obey him and do not go beyond Him ﷻ in search for another protector.

WRONDOING IS THE CAUSE OF RUIN

Allah ﷻ says: ﴿How many towns We have wiped out? Our might has come upon them at dead of night or while they were napping.﴾ (*Al-A'raf*:4). This verse poses one question: Does Allah ﷻ destroy towns or does He destroy its inhabitants? Sometimes Allah ﷻ destroys towns by overturning them as He ﷻ did to the people of Nuh عليه السلام and Lut عليه السلام; and sometimes He ﷻ destroys the inhabitants of towns, as He did to the people of Saleh عليه السلام, when the deadly uproar was sounded.

In this verse, nevertheless, reference is made to the inhabitants of towns. Towns which usually consist of buildings, wells and springs are subjugated to the obedience of Allah and His Praising, and are unable to commit sins. But, it is people of the towns who are able to commit sins.
Rhetorically, the word *town* (Qarya) is used in the Qur'ān to refer to people in town: ﴿And ask the town in which we were.﴾ (*Yusuf*:82). One would not usually ask the buildings or land of the town, but rather, its inhabitants.

The verse also poses the following question: Which comes first, the destruction or the might? It is the might which comes first, then people would be

destroyed. Therefore, according to our limited knowledge, we may wonder why 'might' does not precede 'destruction (wiping out)' in the above verse. The answer is that Allah ﷻ wants us to understand the incidents in the universe as they occur, and according to what is in Allah's Knowledge ﷻ. The wiping out of a town does not take place gradually. Rather, it takes place according to an eternal judgment of Allah ﷻ on those who did evil acts in the land. Allah ﷻ passed the judgment of destruction on the town, first, then comes the might to execute the sentence. Therefore, Allah's ﷻ sentence; that is, the destruction of town precedes in Allah's ﷻ Knowledge His might.

HOW DOES ALLAH ﷻ TAKE REVENGE FROM THE WRONGDOER

History shows us how Allah ﷻ takes revenge from the wrongdoer. Malik Ibn Dinar was quoted as saying: "I read a *Hadith Qudsi* in which Allah ﷻ says, "I am the King of kings; the hearts of kings are in My Hand."[1]

A monarch, ruler or tyrant is warned not to think that he has obtained the position of ruler through his intelligence or power. On the contrary, it was bestowed upon him so that he would repress the wrongdoers. This is evidenced by the fact that if Allah ﷻ wants to end his rule, He ﷻ would take away his reverence from the hearts of his protectors, and instead of defending him with a riffle, He ﷻ would point it out towards him.

Be warned not to think that a king acquires kingship by power rather than by Allah's Leave. When people do wrong and transgress, Allah ﷻ would send someone to wrong them. It is said that the

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[1]Mentioned by Al-Hafidh Al-Haythami in *Majma' Az-Zawa'id*, No.9272, on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda', saying that the tradition was narrated by At-Tabarani in Al-Awsat. The chain of transmitters contain Wahb Ibn Rashid. The tradition is *Matruk*.

wrongdoer is Allah's ﷻ sword on earth, used as a weapon to avenge the wrongdoers and be avenged. In this context, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Thus We let some wrongdoers manage others because of what they had been earning.﴾ (*Al-An'am*:129)
It is as if the evil which grips people were the result of their misdeeds. A pious person used to say: "I know my standing in terms of good or bad deeds through the behaviour of my beast. If it disobeys me, I would say, 'What have I done so that it disobeys me?'" It is as if things are measured. The example given above illustrates good people's self-criticism, that when they commit a wrong, they would immediately criticize and question themselves by asking forgiveness or doing good, so that their records of bad deeds would be clean and blank all the time.

The prophet ﷺ said, "There is not any disaster which visits a Muslim person, but that Allah ﷻ uses it as an expiation for his sins; even as minor as being prickled."[2] If a good person does some wrongs, Allah ﷻ would punish him by inflicting him with an illness or causing the loss of his wealth. The same for a person who commits misdeeds,

[2]Al-Bukhari [5317], Muslim [49/2572] on the authority of Aisha.

whom Allah does not want to punish in the Hereafter. In this context, the prophet ﷺ said: "There is not a Muslim person who falls ill or is inflicted with a harm, but that Allah ﷻ equally wipes out his sins, just as the tree drops its leaves."[1]

[1] Al-Bukhari [5647, *Fath Al-Bari*] and Muslim [45/2571] on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud.

THE STATE OF THE DISBELIEVER AND WRONGDOER ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

The disbelievers might think that they would ransom themselves from the torment on the Day of Judgment with anything. Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Even though each person who has done something wrong had everything on earth, he would still try to ransom himself with it.﴾ (*Yunus*:54) This means that when the disbelievers see the torment, they would wish that if they have everything on earth, with its treasures, they would ransom themselves with them to escape the torment they see. But that would be impossible. On that Day, neither repentance nor ransom would be accepted from them.

If *Zulm* (injustice) means usurping somebody's right; that is, what he/she has earned legally, then *Az-Zalim* (the wrongdoer) wrongfully and with hostility takes what the other has sweated for. This stops the activity of life, because given that I work and other takes my fruits unlawfully is the result of work, then I am not going to work. Moreover, when the wrongdoer does wrong, he not only takes unlawfully the right of the other, but mislead other powerful people like him to usurp the rights of the weak and wrong them. As a result, injustice

prevails, and if it prevails in a society, then it would give rise to unemployment and paralyses the flow of the entire life.

Therefore, the wrongdoer takes more than his right, lies to others, wrong and usurp their rights. However, even if he were to take all that is in the present life, and would like on the Day of Judgment ransom himself with it against the torment of that Day, it would not be accepted from him. But why? This is because he has transgressed the limits, wronged and lied to people. In this context, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Anyone who invent things will be disappointed.﴾ (*Ta-Ha*:61) This is a prevalent phenomenon in the present life before the Hereafter. Take for example someone who takes bribery, commits embezzlement and theft, then gets caught. He would say to the law, take all that I have and let me go. Similarly, someone who wants to smuggle enormous sums of money abroad and gets caught, he would say, 'Take these moneys and leave me alone.'

Therefore, at the time of danger, man would commit these wrongs and sins and would get caught, and he would ransom himself all that he has, but this ransom would not be accepted him on the Day of Judgment. However, it is worth considering the two

following verses: ﴿Heed a day when no soul will make amends in any way for any other soul and no compensation will be accepted from it nor any intercession benefits it.﴾ (*Al-Baqara*:123) and ﴿Heed a day when no soul will compensate for any other soul in any way. Intercession will not be accepted from him, nor will any compensation be taken from it, nor will they be supported.﴾ (*Al-Baqara*:48). The Qur'ān skeptics use these verses as a gateway for casting doubts on the Qur'ān, claiming that it is the same style and the same meaning, but there is a change in the order of words. According to them, sometimes ﴿compensation﴾ precedes ﴿intercession﴾ and vice-versa, sometimes the verse says ﴿no compensation will be accepted from it﴾ and sometimes ﴿nor will any compensation be taken from it﴾, sometimes the verse says ﴿Intercession will not be accepted﴾ and sometimes ﴿...nor any intercession benefits it﴾. We say to those skeptics that if they knew the eloquence of the Arabs, they would appreciate that the first verse is eloquent and the second is just as eloquent.

Consider the verse: ﴿Heed a day when no soul will make amends in any way for any other soul.﴾ How many souls do we have? We have two souls; the first soul is the intercessor, and the second is the one for which intercession is done. In the first verse,

﴿no compensation will be accepted from it﴾ refers to the intercessor soul, which says, 'take this and leave.' If it is not accepted from him, he would look for an intercessor, in which case intercession would be refused. Hence, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿...no compensation will be accepted from it nor any intercession benefits it.﴾

As regards the verse: ﴿Intercession will not be accepted from him, nor will any compensation be taken from it, nor will they be supported﴾, it starts with 'intercession'. There will be someone who would intercede for the wrongdoer in the Hereafter, but his intercession would not be accepted, in which case, he would offer a compensation to save his friend, but that, too would not be accepted from him. He would be told, 'No compensation will be taken from you. In summary, in the first verse we have, 'neither compensation will be accepted from him, nor intercession will benefit it', and in the second verse, 'Neither intercession will be accepted nor compensation will be taken.' Therefore, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Even though each person who has done something wrong had everything on earth, he would still try to ransom himself with it.﴾ (*Yunus*:54), meaning that a person would attempt to give all that he has on earth as ransom, in the belief that he owns, but it the ransom will not be accepted, and if

anyone should try to intercede for the wrongdoer, his intercession would not be accepted.

Allah ﷻ proceeds to say in the same verse: ﴿They will conceal regret once they see the torment.﴾, meaning that regret will not show on them, but their hearts will be torn apart. This is because if the torment is enormous, then blood gets clotted in the veins of the tormented, and he will not, as a result, be able to scream. The horrifying scene will dumb his tongue. He would be asked to speak, and he will not be able to. *Screaming* is a form of physical breathing; and the inability to scream is an intensification of torment.

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE WRONGDOER IN THIS LIFE BEFORE THE NEXT LIFE

If the all punishment had been postponed for the Hereafter, then injustice would have prevailed among people and across the entire universe. A person who does not believe in the Hereafter, would lark about as he pleases. For this reason, it was necessary to set up a punishment for his actions in this life, which would draw people's attention to Allah's ﷻ control over His Universe. The punishment of the wrongdoer would also set a lesson for others. Yet, the serious punishment still awaits him in the Hereafter. Allah ﷻ says: ﴿The ones who act unjustly will have torment beyond that.﴾ (*At-Tur*:47), meaning that they will have a torment before the greatest torment. When Allah ﷻ intends the torment of the present life, he says: ﴿We shall gradually bring those who reject Our signs from a place they do not recognize.﴾ (*Al-A'raf*:182), meaning, Allah ﷻ will lead them on into a trap, just like when the investigator leads the suspect by trapping him with questions, looking for any contradictions in his answers.

﴿Gradually﴾ in this context refers to the stages leading to the punishment in the present life. Then, the punishment will be lifted up, and they will continue doing wrong, and another punishment will be set for them, and so on and so forth until they reach the torment of Hellfire in the Hereafter. In this respect, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿So once they forgot what they had been reminded of...﴾, referring to their persistence in disbelief and disobedience, ﴿We opened up the doors to everything for them﴾, referring to health, wealth, children and all the blessings of this life in general, then ﴿until just when they were happiest with what they had been given, We caught them suddenly, and there they were confounded.﴾ (*Al-An'am*:42).

But why such rise and fall? This is because when Allah ﷻ wants to punish a wrongdoer, he would punish him lightly so that he may wake up. But if he persists in his wrongdoing, Allah ﷻ would bestow so many blessing upon him until he is highly elevated, then would bring him down from the sublime to the ridiculous. It is like when two are fighting, and would grab the other and raise him so high, then ground him. Why does one raise the other so high? He would raise him so high so that the fall would be so painful, for if he grounds him at the ground level, the fall would be minor. When one wishes to gradually lead another to fall in a pit,

the other might, with his intelligence, know the pit he has been gradually led to; but if it is Allah ﷻ Who is doing the act, no one has intelligence before Allah ﷻ. Hence, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿We shall gradually draw them from a place they do not recognize.﴾ (*Al-Qalam*:45). This is to say that man cannot find out about Allah's ﷻ gradual scheme and, therefore, impair it, for the simple reason that Allah ﷻ knows and man does not know.

Allah ﷻ says: ﴿I shall even put up with them for a while; for My plan is strong.﴾ (*Al-Qalam*:44) In this verse, *put up* implies delaying the punishment; meaning, that Allah ﷻ does not inflict His punishment on the wrongdoer all at once; but He ﷻ would rather do it gradually, until people feel the wrongdoer's evils, and know when Allah ﷻ, the epitome of good, faith and people's way of life, takes him on. This is because, if every wrongdoer is punished at the moment he has committed a wrong, people would not feel his evils, nor appreciate Allah's ﷻ protection to them against this wrongdoer.

Therefore, gradual punishment is truly present in the inner selves of the believers by force of faith; and the more evil prevails in a society, the more good permeates their selves and the more they resort to

Allah's ﷻ Way for rescue from the hardship they are in. In the above verse, there is a delay in punishment, but not a negligence. For, the punishment follows immediately: ﴿For My plan is strong.﴾ *Plan* in this context refers to a secret strategy prepared against the wrongdoer so that he would not get prepared to defend himself against any evil. A secret strategy between one person and another may or may not be exposed. However, no one can expose or avert Allah's ﷻ strategy. Hence, Allah ﷻ says, ﴿My plan is strong.﴾

BE JUST ... EVEN WITH THE DISBELIEVERS AND WRONGDOERS

Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Judgment will be passed on them in all fairness, and they will not be wronged.﴾ (*Yunus*:54) Reference in this verse is made to the disbelievers and wrongdoers, and one might wonder why are they treated with fairness, and judgment should be passed concerning the believers and disbelievers, as the entire dispute is between them; and whereas it is all about those who deserve punishment, then how does Allah ﷻ pass His judgment? Here, you should note Allah's ﷻ Justice; and do not think that the disbeliever in Allah ﷻ would not be punished if he wrongs his fellow disbeliever.

For example, if a disbeliever wrongs another disbeliever, would Allah ﷻ discard the issue without punishing the wrongdoer? The answer is 'No', because Allah ﷻ created all of us, and one of the prerequisites of *Rububiyya* (Lordship) is the punishment of every wrongdoer and taking revenge for every wronged person, even though the wronged were a disbeliever in Him ﷻ. ﴿Judgment will be passed ﴾ means that there is a case which requires a

judgment; and a judgment means impartiality and settlement of a dispute between two parties. Given a judgment results in a decision, and given Allah ﷻ is the Lord of all creations and the Creator of All creations, then all creations are equal vis-à-vis what the Lordship offers. For example, the sun rises on both the disbeliever and believer, water descends on both the disbeliever and believer, and the air is breathed by both the disbeliever and believer. These are the offers of *Rububiyya* in which all mankind are equal. Therefore, if a person wrongs another, whether the wrongdoer and wronged are believers or disbelievers, then Allah ﷻ would resolve the dispute with fairness, and Allah ﷻ does not wrong anyone, and it is He ﷻ Who has commanded us to follow His Example in morals, which include justice: ﴿And do not any ill-will toward any folk incriminate you so that you swerve from dealing justly.﴾[1] (*Al-Ma'ida*:8)

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[1]Do not let prejudice (hatred of s people) interfere with your judgment, and cause you to judge matters unjustly. Whoever has a right, should get it, and when justice involves an adversary (disbeliever), it is a reprimand to him, because he has denied Faith. Surely, the adversary would say to himself, "This Muslim's fairness did not prevent him from telling the truth, and his creed makes of him a strong person and that his religion which commands him to act in fairness, how good such religion is."

THE PUNISHMENT FOR EXCESS OF INJUSTICE

Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Thus We reward anyone who overdoes things and does not believe in his Lord's Signs. Torment in the Hereafter will be even more severe and everlasting.﴾ (*Ta-Ha*:127) ﴿Thus﴾ means that those who overdo things will be rewarded in this way. *Overdoing things* in this context means straying a certain reasonable border. For example, one eats a certain amount of food to remain alive, and if he eats much then he is said to have overdone it. Similarly, if one spends all his income without saving anything, his life will never improve. For example, he will not be able to buy a car one day, or build a house for his family, because he spends all his income without saving any money.

Islam, nevertheless, taught us how to be moderate in expenditure and how to spend a portion of our income and save another. Allah ﷻ wants two things from man's management of money: expenditure and thrift. If one does not spend, then the interests of life would come to a standstill: factories would stop their production, employees would stop going to work and the causes of earning of living would stop. However, if every man spends money in order to buy his needs, then the wheel of life would keep on

turning. However, one should not spend all the money he has, but save some in time of need so that he would be able to improve his standards of living and provide a comfortable life for him and his family.

Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Who when they spend, give neither too lavishly nor yet hold back, and keep to a happy medium.﴾ (*Al-Furqan*:67) If one does not spend, he will hinder the flow of life, and if he spends extravagantly, then he will live in hardship and debt, and will never better his situation. Hence, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Do not be tight-fisted nor extravagant, lest you sit back blameworthy, destitute.﴾ (*Al-Isra'*:29)

When Allah ﷻ created man, He ﷻ also created the ingredients for his livelihood such as food, drink and air, and determined the lawful food which he should eat and the unlawful food he must not eat. Therefore, the most serious form of extravagance is to introduce what Allah ﷻ has made as unlawful into what He ﷻ has made lawful. Whoever does so, is said to have strayed the border. Therefore, extravagance is going over the limit, and you should not make it difficult for your self by depriving it of what Allah ﷻ has made lawful, nor be extravagant toward it by straying the limit and allowing it (the self) what Allah ﷻ has made unlawful. This is all

for the sake of leading a good life and preparing for the Next.

Just as Allah ﷻ has made the ingredients of livelihood available for man, He ﷻ has also ensured that his human race be perpetuated until the Day of Judgment. For this reason, Allah ﷻ created marriage for enjoyment and safeguarding the propagation of race, and set up rules therefor. So, do not act extravagantly in this respect nor indulge in what Allah ﷻ made unlawful. A person is said to have acted extravagantly if he transfers something from what is unlawful into something that is lawful or if he transfers something from what is lawful into something that is unlawful.

Part of Allah's ﷻ Mercy upon His servants is His advice to man not to despair if he has acted extravagantly against the self, pursued his desires and what Allah ﷻ has forbidden, but which the Satan has beautified for him and made it look permissible. Hence, He ﷻ says: ﴿Say: "My servants who have acted extravagantly against themselves still do not despair of Allah's Mercy. Allah forgives all offences.﴾ (*Az-Zumar*:53)
In this verse, Allah ﷻ endears repentance to them, for He ﷻ will accept it from them so long as they are believers in Him and His Messenger ﷺ, and so

long as their disobedient acts are far from polytheism. So, any extravagant person against his self, any transgressor of Allah's ﷻ Limits, any usurper of Allah's rights or other people's rights, should take this opportunity and redress the balance, by reverting to Allah ﷻ so that He may accept their repentance and wipe out his past sins.

Reverting to the above verse: ﴿Thus We reward anyone who overdoes things and does not believe in his Lord's Signs. Torment in the Hereafter will be even more severe and everlasting.﴾, overdoing things or extravagance is second to the status of non-Faith, because extravagance causes you to transfer the unlawful into the lawful and the lawful into the unlawful and; thus, cripple the application of the verses of lawfulness, unlawfulness, so on and so forth.

EXTRAVAGANCE MAY SQUANDER THE COMPONENTS OF LIFE

Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Our Lord, pardon us our offences and our excesses in our affairs.﴾ (*Al-Imran*:147) What is excess in affairs? Any disobedient act man commits is an addition to the components of his life. Allah ﷻ created marriage so that we may build a family, propagate the race and get our sexual satisfaction in accordance with specified laws. However, when, for example, one has girl friends or mistresses, or makes it difficult for those who desire to marry, then that would be called excess in affairs.

Allah ﷻ has given us wealth proportionally, but if act greedily and take the other's wealth unlawfully, then that would cause hostility and hatred between people, severance of kinship ties, and this is a transgression of the limits and excess in affairs. Allah ﷻ has also set up for us laws regulating our management of wealth. Therefore, whoever transgresses the limits by, for example, dealing in usury, then such an act would be the most serious transgression. In other words, excess in affairs is taking something which does not constitutes one of your rights, and that which is not part of your rights and is not given to you by Allah ﷻ, then it is not

part of your life's necessities, and you can live without it.

EXTRAVAGANCE IS A BAD CHOICE

Those who act extravagantly against their selves do not take into account the reward for such an act. This is the reason why all offences take place at the time of the offender's unawareness of the reward. The offender commits an offence with the confidence that he will get away with it. For example, a thief goes to steal in the knowledge that he will not be caught, and if he were to think that he will be caught if he steals, he would never steal. Allah's ﷻ message is: He who wants to digress from the system of choice I have set up for you, beware doing so without taking into account the reward for such a digression. Take it seriously and ask yourself: What is the offence going to benefit me? How much misery is it going to give me? Put both questions in the balance and you will know that Allah ﷻ will give you the endless good; and know that ﴿Allah there is no god but Him shall gather you on the Day of Judgment.﴾ (*An-Nisa'*:87)

The Day of Judgment is the Day about which Allah ﷻ says: ﴿The Day when mankind will stand before the Lord of the Universe.﴾ (*Al-Mutafifin*:6) Why the Day of Judgment? Because, it is the Day on which Allah ﷻ rewards he who has done good and punish he who has done bad in the present life.

Take this example from real life. A man gave his son one pound and told him: "Buy whatever you like, and note that if you buy something interesting, I will reward you for it, but if you buy something bad like game cards or something similar, then I will punish you." By doing so, the father has given his son the buying authority, expressed in 'buy whatever you like.' The question is: Was the child's act of buying game cards against his father's will? No, because it was the father who gave him the choice of buying, but the child acted in a way that did not please his father.

Similarly, what about the servant who digresses from following the path of guidance which Allah ﷻ has commanded? When the When the servant follows the path of guidance, then he does what is desirable to Allah ﷻ, but when he commits an offence, he does what is undesirable to Allah ﷻ. If Allah ﷻ wanted guidance for all mankind, then He ﷻ would have made them angels, and no servant would ever disobey Him.

When an offender commits an offence, he does so because Allah ﷻ has created the freedom of choice for him. When one says, any act is from Allah ﷻ, this is true, but if you asked: "Why do we get punished?" Then, the answer should be: It is

because man does not steer the instrument of choice towards what is beneficial for him, but rather towards disobedience of Allah ﷻ. The knife, for example, is an instrument for cutting. If it was used for slaughtering a chicken, then there is nothing in the act which deserves punishment, but if it was used for slaughtering a person, then the act will be treated as unlawful. Do we say to someone who brings the knife home, you have brought a weapon for crime? No. He/she has brought the knife to be used beneficially, but it could still be used as a weapon, and that is where the element of choice comes.

Therefore, that any act comes from Allah ﷻ is true, because even the person who is given the freedom of choice acts only because Allah ﷻ has created him with the freedom of choice. But, does Allah ﷻ oblige him to commit an offence? No, Allah ﷻ has laid down a system in order to guide every man to the right path, and if one chooses something contrary to the system, then that is his choice and he will be held accountable for it.

EXTRAVAGANCE IS MAN'S INJUSTICE AGAINST HIS SELF

For a man who acts extravagantly against his self by taking what is unlawful such as drinking alcohol, for example, there will come a time, when he will deprive himself of some things that are lawful. Drinking alcohol will cause him to fall ill and consult a doctor, who would advise him to follow a strict diet by not eating several types of food and drink, because he suffers from cirrhosis. Such extravagance is man's injustice against his self, resulting in depriving his self of certain things which are in reality lawful for him, not to mention the punishment of the Hereafter. A person such as this one has fallen into what Allah ﷻ has prohibited, and, as a result, Allah ﷻ has punished him by depriving him of what has been prescribed lawful for him.

Take another the example of a person who has overeaten a certain type of food such as sugar, which is a blessing from Allah ﷻ, and fallen ill, as a result. The doctor would tell him: "You have gone over the limits of eating sugar and you have, as a result, disabled your body's ability to use sugar properly, and fallen ill. Now, do not eat any sugary food." The patient would love to eat sugary food,

and is capable of acquiring it, but it is prohibited for him. It is as if Allah ﷻ tells him: By wronging your self, you have deprived it of what I have made lawful for you.

With the foregoing in mind, prohibition may either be legally, when the penalty comes from Allah ﷻ, or inherently, when there is an extravagance on the part of the self. We should always read, ﴿Because of wrongdoing on the part of those who are Jews, We have forbidden them certain wholesome things which had been permitted them; and because they blocked of so many people from Allah's way.﴾ (*An-Nisa'*:160)

Similarly, a person who obtains money through usury, does so in order to increase his wealth. We may ask him, "Why do you need money for? Do you need it for the sake of having money or for another purpose?" It is true, money is a form of provision, but it is an indirect provision, because it buys things which people will benefit from, and that is called direct provision. Take for instance, a man with an enormous amount of gold in the desert, but with no food. Such a large amount of gold would not benefit him in such a situation, but a piece of bread and water in such a situation would be more expensive than gold. Therefore, money is a

form of provision, but it is an indirect provision. Whoever increases his money by means of usury, should know that Allah ﷻ will wipe money earned in such a way and dissipate it through infliction of adversities. Hence, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Allah wipes out usury and nourishes acts of charity.﴾ (*Al-Baqara*: 276)

Generally an manages himself, and if he wishes to keep on enjoying the lawful things Allah ﷻ has granted him and blessings, then he must not permit his self any thing unlawful, because, Allah ﷻ never removes a blessing from his servant without any reason: ﴿And you Lord does not wrong the servants.﴾ (*Fusilat*:46). Therefore, it is man who wrongs himself, according to the verse: ﴿Allah never wrongs people in anything, but people wronged their selves.﴾ (*Yunus*:44)

INTERPRETATION OF THE TRADITION:

"My servants, I have made injustice unlawful for Me and unlawful for you, so do not commit injustice against one another."

BY:
IBN TAYMIYYA AND IMAM IBN RAJAB

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Abu Dharr ﷺ reported: "The prophet ﷺ quoted Allah ﷻ (through Gabriel ﷺ) as saying: "My servants, I have made injustice unlawful for Me and unlawful for you, so do not commit injustice against one another. My servants, all of you are liable to err except one whom I guide on the right path, so seek right guidance from Me so that I may direct you to the right path. O My servants, all of you are hungry (need food) except the one whom I feed, so beg food from Me, so that I may give it to you. O My servants, all of you are naked (need clothes) except the one whom I provide with garments, so beg clothes from Me, so that I may clothe you. O My servants, you commit a wrong night and day and I am there to pardon your sins, so beg pardon from Me so that I may grant you pardon.

O My servants, you will not reach My Harm so that you may harm, nor reach My Benefit so that you may benefit Me. O My servants, even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, even if the whole of the human race, and that of the *Jinns*, become (equally) God-conscious like the heart of a single person amongst you, nothing will add to My Power. O My servants, even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, the whole human race, and that of the *Jinns* too become in unison the most wicked (all beating) like the heart of a single person, it will cause no loss of My Power. O My servants,

even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, the whole human race, and that of *Jinns* also, all stand in one place and you ask Me and I confer upon every person what he asks for, it will not in any way cause any loss to Me (even less) than that which is caused to the ocean by dipping a needle in it. My servants, these deeds of yours, which I am recording for you, I shall reward you for them. So he who finds good should praise Allah ﷻ and he who does not find it should not blame anyone but himself."[1]

Ibn Taymiyya's Interpretation

There are two issues as to the opening statement of the tradition (My servants, I have made injustice unlawful for Me), each having sub-issues, among which are.

As regards the injustice which Allah ﷻ has made unlawful for Himself and against anybody, it is expressed in more than one verse: ﴿And We did not wrong them﴾ (*An-Nahl*:118), ﴿And your Lord does not wrong anybody.﴾ (*Al-Kahf*:49), ﴿And you Lord does not wrong the servants.﴾ (*Fusilat*:46), and ﴿Allah does not harm anything so much as an

[1]Muslim 55/2577

atom's weight: if a fine deed exists, he multiplies it.﴾ (*An-Nisa'*:40). It is not either His Intention ﷻ to wrong anybody: ﴿And Allah does not want to wrong the servants.﴾ (*Al-Imran*:108) and ﴿And Allah does not want to wrong the servants.﴾ (*Ghafir*:40), nor have his servants fear injustice from him against them: ﴿While anyone who has performed honourable deeds and is a believer will need fear no injustice nor any curtailment (of his reward).﴾ (*Ta-Ha*:112)

Scholars argued so much about the meaning of *Zulm* (injustice) that they formed two different poles, with a pole in-between -*the best of things are those which stand in the middle*- which appears to be the most correct. This is because this moderate pole studied (*Al-Qadar*) the divine preordainment in terms of its unison with the Islamic Law. Therefore, arguing without sufficient knowledge will result in the misguidance of the entire nation; and that is why the prophet ﷺ warned his companions not to argue over the issue of *Zulm*.

In the tradition of distress, the prophet ﷺ said: "No distressed or miserable servant says the following invocation, but that Allah ﷻ relieves his distress and misery, and supersedes them with joy and happiness: O Allah, I am your servant, the son of

your servant, the son of your she-servant, my brain (thought process part) is in Your Hand, Your Law is binding on me, Your Judgment is just towards me. I am invoking You, with every Name that is Yours, which You have given Yourself, mentioned in Your Book (Qur'ān), taught it to some of Your creatures, or withheld in the unknown, to make the Qur'ān the spring of my heart, the light of my breast, and the dispersal of my grief and distress. Upon hearing this invocation, the companions of the prophet ﷺ wondered, "O Allah's Messenger! Shall we learn these words?" The prophet ﷺ replied, "Of course, for whoever has heard them."[1] The tradition indicates, as far as justice is concerned, that every judgment Allah ﷻ passes on his servant is fair. It is said that every blessing from Allah ﷻ is a bounty and every curse from him is an act of justice.

There is also another tradition which goes: "I have obeyed you by Your Grace and grace is Yours, and I have disobeyed You by Your Knowledge -or justice- and evidence is in Your Possession. Therefore, I am invoking You to forgive me, knowing that Your Evidence is the most valid

[1]Imam Ahmad [1/391-452] on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud. The chain of transmission of this tradition is authentic (Ahmad Shakir)

against me, and that I have no evidence to justify myself."

Reverting to the opening statement of the tradition, it appears that it contains several laws, sciences, fundamental and secondary issues. In fact, it contains all the issues related to the tributes of Allah ﷻ and *Al-Qadar* (divine preordainment).

The statement which follows, (and unlawful for you, so do not commit injustice against one another) constitutes the entire religion (i.e. Islam), in the sense that all that Allah ﷻ forbids in the tradition is injustice and all that He ﷻ commands therein is justice. Observe the following verse: ﴿We have sent Our Messengers with explanations, and sent the Book and the Balance down along with them, so that mankind may conduct themselves with all fairness. We have sent Iron down laden with grim violence as well as (other) benefits for mankind, so that Allah may know who supports Him and His Messengers even though [He is] unseen.﴾ (*Al-Hadid*:25)

In this verse, Allah ﷻ informs the reader that He has sent Messengers, the Book and Balance so that people may do justice, and iron so that the Truth is supported. In other words, the Book guides and the

sword supports, and that is why forcing people to compliance was achieved by the people of the Qur'ān (guidance) and people of the iron (force). Some scholars from *As-Salaf* used to say, "There are two categories of people who, if they act honourably, people would, too, act honourably: leaders and scholars."[1]

Since knowledge precedes justice, then he who has no knowledge does not know what justice is, and mankind is unjust and ignorant, save the one whom Allah ﷻ has forgiven and, therefore, caused him to become learned and just; and people have become judges. Other categories are three: the just scholar, the ignorant and the unjust. The last two categories are among the people of Hellfire, as the prophet ﷺ said. In fact, man is awarded according to his efforts. The prophet ﷺ said in this context: "If a ruler issues a personal judgment (*Ijtihad*) on a matter and his judgment is right then he will receive two rewards. But if he issues a personal judgment

[1]Reported as *Hadith Marfu'* on the authority of the prophet ﷺ. Tradition transmitted by Abu Nu'aym in *Al-Hilya* [4/96] and Ibn Abdelbarr in *Jami' Al-Bayan* [1/184]. According to Al-Albani, this tradition is fabricated (*Silisilat Al-Ahadith Adh-Dha'ifa wa Al-Mawdhu'a*, No.16.)

which proves wrong, then he will receive one reward."[1]

As for the part which goes, (O My servants, all of you are hungry (need food) except the one whom I feed, so beg food from Me, so that I may give it to you. O My servants, all of you are naked (need clothes) except the one whom I provide with garments, so beg clothes from Me, so that I may clothe you), there are two important issues:

First: The necessity to rely on Allah ﷻ for provision such as food for the acquisition of benefit and guard against harm such as clothing. Only Allah ﷻ has the absolute ability to provide food and clothing. It is worth noting in this respect that the ability of providing food or clothing which man may have depend on certain ways and means which he follows. Hence, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿The family head must support women and clothe them properly.﴾ (*Al-Baqara*:233), ﴿Do not give the feebleminded your property which Allah has granted you for [their] support; provide for them out of it, and clothe them and address them decently.﴾ (*An-Nisa'*:5).

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[1]Al-Bukhari [*Fath Al-Bari*:7352] and Muslim [15/1716], on the authority of Amru Ibn Al-'As ﷺ.

What one is commanded to spend, provide or grant in this context is the portion he has been allocated from Allah ﷻ: ﴿When they are told: "Spend something Allah has provided you with," the ones who disbelieve tell those who believe: "Should we feed someone whom Allah feed if He so wishes?﴾ (*Yasin*:47). In this verse, Allah ﷻ reprimands whoever neglects to donate from what he has been allocated, basing his act on the fact that it is Allah ﷻ Who provides for His creations. From this standpoint, it appears that even if one has the ability to provide –by means of following the ways and means– there still be the necessity of relying on Allah ﷻ for such an ability. In fact, the need and the feeling of poverty toward Allah ﷻ coexists with the ways and means. For, there is no creation which alone has the complete ways and means to acquire what it needs. So, events take place with the ways and means, but only with the Will of Allah ﷻ; whatever He wishes takes place and whatever He does not wish does not take place. Whoever thinks that the ways and means are sufficient without Allah's Reliance, has neglected the element of reliance on Allah ﷻ which He commands him and; thus, violated the obligation of *Tawhid* (monotheism). People who do so are let down if they rely solely on the ways and means. Whoever wants support and provision without the

intervention of Allah ﷻ, Allah ﷻ will let him down. Ali ﷺ said in this respect: "A servant requests no one, but his Lord (Allah ﷻ) and fears nothing, but his sin."
Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Say, "Have you ever seen what you appeal to instead of Allah? If Allah wanted [to cause] me any trouble, would such females ever remove His trouble? Or if He wants some mercy for me, will such females hold back His mercy." Say, "Allah is [the Means] by which I reckon; on Him do the reliant rely."﴾ (*Az-Zummar*:38)

Furthermore, whoever solely adopts Allah's ﷻ Reliance without the ways and means, is ignorant, wrongdoer and disobedient to Allah ﷻ, as he has neglected what Allah ﷻ commands. Obeying what Allah ﷻ commands is a form of worshipping Allah ﷻ. Observe the following verse: ﴿So, worship Him and rely on Him.﴾ (*Hud*:123) Performing a deed which one has been commanded to do relying solely on the ways and means (i.e. without relying on Allah ﷻ) is just as serious a sin as relying on Allah ﷻ solely, without relying on the ways and means. Both categories have failed to comply with some of what they have been commanded to do. And despite their common sin, one may be more blameworthy than the other, given that reliance on Allah ﷻ is in reality part of the ways and means.

Abu Dawud reported in the *Sunan* that the prophet ﷺ settled a dispute between two men, and the one against whom the decision was, turned away, saying, "*Hasbiyya-llahu wani'mal-wakil* (For me Allah ﷻ suffices and how good His Reliance ﷻ is)." The prophet ﷺ said to him, "Allah ﷻ blames for losing hearty, but apply intelligence, and if you are defeated, say: "*Hasbiyya-llahu wani'mal-wakil* (For me Allah ﷻ suffices and how good His Reliance ﷻ is)."[1]

Abu Hurayra ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "A strong believer is better and more loveable to Allah ﷻ than a weak Muslim, and there is good in everyone. Cherish that which gives you benefit and seek help from Allah ﷻ and do not lose heart. If anything (in the form of a trouble) comes to you, do not say, 'If I had done so and so, I would have ...', but say, 'Allah ﷻ did what He had ordained,' for your regretful 'ifs' open the door to the intervention of the Satan.'"[2]

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[1]Abu Dawud [3627] on the authority of 'Awf Ibn Malik. Classed by Al-Albani as a weak tradition.
[2]Muslim [34/2664]

Interpretation: The part 'Cherish that which gives you benefit and seek help from Allah ﷻ and do not lose heart' refers to the reliance on the ways and means which Allah ﷻ commands; which is, cherishing what is beneficial. Then, comes the reliance on Allah ﷻ which is expressed in the phrase 'seek help from Allah ﷻ'. Therefore, whoever relies solely on of them, has disobeyed the other. Further, the tradition also forbids the loss of heart, which is the antonym of intelligence, as the preceding tradition expresses: "Allah ﷻ blames for losing heart, but apply intelligence."

Another relevant tradition says: "The intelligent is the one who blames his soul and prepares for what comes after death, but the heart-loser is the one who lets his soul follow its desires and wishes from Allah ﷻ."[1]

In this tradition the heart-loser is the opposite of intelligent, and whoever says, "a heart-loser is the opposite of pious," has altered and misinterpreted the tradition. Another relevant tradition goes:

[1] Ibn Majja [4260] on the authority of Shaddad Ibn Aws ؓ. Tradition classed by Al-Albani as weak.

"Everything was created in measure, even heart-loss and intelligence."[2]

There is also the tradition which Al-Bukhari reported on the authority of Ibn Abbas ﷺ: "During the pilgrimage season, the Yemenis would head for Makka without provision, and would say, "We are the reliant on Allah ﷻ," and upon reaching Makka, they would start asking people for provision."[3]

Consequently, Allah ﷻ revealed: ﴿Make provision; yet the best provision is doing your duty.﴾ (*Al-Baqra*:197). The verse indicates that whoever performs a deed which aims to make provision, as commanded by Allah ﷻ, and uses it as a source of help in the obedience of Allah ﷻ, and gives of it to the need, is said to be obedient to Allah ﷻ as far as these two issues (making provision and donating). However, he who neglects this duty (making provision) and seeks reliance on the pilgrims' provisions, even though his attention were not directed to a specific pilgrim, he is said to direct his attention to the whole. But, if the one with the provision neglects the principle of reliance on Allah

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[2]Part of a tradition reported by Muslim [18/2655] on the authority of Abdullah Ibn 'Amru ﷺ.
[3]Al-Bukhari [1451]

ﷻ which Allah ﷻ commands him, and sympathizing with the pilgrims, his neglectfulness of what he has been commanded to do is similar to the one who neglects the principle of making provision which he has been commanded to do.

Add to these categories, another category of people who make reliance and invocation exclusively reserved for a specific type of people in the belief that this specific type of people are the exception in the divine ordainment. But Allah ﷻ says in the tradition: "all of you are hungry (need food) except the one whom I feed, so beg food from Me, so that I may give it to you. O My servants, all of you are naked (need clothes) except the one whom I provide with garments, so beg clothes from Me, so that I may clothe you."

At-Tabarani and other scholars reported the tradition in which the prophet ﷺ said, "Each of you should ask his Lord ﷻ for all his needs, even the lace of his sandals, for if it is severed and Allah ﷻ does not facilitate its repair, it will not be repaired."[1]

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[1]Reported by Ibn Hibban in his *Sahih* [866] on the authority of Anas ﷺ and Abu Ya'la in his *Musnad* [3403]. Sheikh Hussein Asad said: "The chain of transmission of this tradition is authentic and fulfils the requirements set up by Muslim for the transmission of authentic traditions.

Abu Khuzama ﷺ quoted his father as saying: "I asked the prophet ﷺ, "O Allah's Messenger, does the medicine we do, the *ruqya* (recitation of Qur'ān and invocation of Allah ﷻ for treatment purposes) we recite, and the prevention we observe, avert in any way Allah's ﷻ divine preordainment?" The prophet ﷺ replied, "These are part of Allah's divine preordainment."[2]

As regards the part "**O My servants, you commit a wrong night and day and I am there to pardon your sins, so beg pardon from Me so that I may grant you pardon,**" reference here is made to the forgiveness of sins in general, which may be two types: Forgiveness for the repentant and forgiveness which refers to a lessening of punishment.

As for the former, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Say: "My servants who have acted extravagantly against themselves still do not despair of Allah's Mercy. Allah forgives all offences; He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. Turn in repentance towards your Lord and commit your selves peacefully to Him before torment comes to you; then you will not be supported.﴾ (*Az-Zummar*:53-54). This context

[2]At-Tirmidi [2148] and Ibn Majjah [3437]. Tradition classed by Al-Albani as weak.

conforms to the reason of the revelation of the verse which indicates that no offender should despair of Allah's ﷻ forgiveness, no matter how intense his sins become, because such increase in sins does not pose a challenge for Allah ﷻ to pardon his repentant servant. This verse is general and includes polytheism and other sins, as Allah ﷻ pardons whoever repents.

As for the latter, reference is made to an alleviation of torment or its postponement to a specific time. This is absolute and general, and this is the reason why the prophet ﷺ interceded for Abu Talib, who was, as a result of the intercession, transferred from the severest scorching fire into a lesser degree of fire: He was made to walk with sandals of fire, from which his head boils. The prophet ﷺ said, "Had it not been for me, he would have ended up in the lowest rank in Hellfire."[1] The meaning of this tradition is reflected in the verse which says: ﴿If Allah should take men to task for what they have earned, He would not leave upon the face of the earth one creature that crawls.﴾ (*Fatir*:45), (*An-Nahl*:61) and ﴿Whatever affliction may visit you is for what your own hands have earned; and He pardons much.﴾ (*Ash-Shura*:35).

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[1]Muslim [213/364] on the authority of An-Nu'man Ibn Bashir ﷺ.

As for **"O My servants, you will not reach My Harm so that you may harm, nor reach My Benefit so that you may benefit Me,"** it means that Allah's kindness towards His servants, when He ﷻ, for instance, grants their requests and forgives their wrongs, does not mean for the sake of acquiring a benefit or averting a harm. Allah ﷻ in this tradition tells us that it is not like when a creature does a favour for another and expects to be equally awarded or prevents a harm against him and expects the other to prevent any harm against him.

Qatada said: "Allah ﷻ does no command the servants to do as He commands for the sake of His needs, nor does He ﷻ forbid them out of misery on His Part. On the contrary, He ﷻ commands them to do what He ﷻ commands them to do for the sake of their interest, and forbids them to do what is detrimental to them."

- O My servants, even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, even if the whole of the human race, and that of the *Jinns*, become (equally) God-conscious like the heart of a single person amongst you, nothing will add to My Power. O My servants, even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, the whole human race,

and that of the *Jinns* too become in unison the most wicked (all beating) like the heart of a single person, it will cause no loss of My Power.

Power in this context may either refer to the ability to deal with things and management, or the soul of the ability to deal with things and management. It may also refer to ownership, which is the source of dealing and management, or to all. In any case, neither the piety of the pious nor the indecency of the indecent will add to or reduce from His Power. On the contrary, it is His Will and Ability to create whatever He ﷻ wills. If He ﷻ wants to prevent the indecency of an indecent person, nothing will stand on His way, as the wrongful kings in the present life do to their ruled who oppose their commands. Had Allah ﷻ willed, He would not have created anything in the piety of the pious which He ﷻ has created, which means that there will be nothing worthy of need or help, as the kings in the present life are in need of many of their subservient ruled.

- O My servants, even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, the whole human race, and that of *Jinns* also, all stand in one place and you ask Me and I confer upon every person what he asks for, it will not in any way cause any loss to

Me (even less) than that which is caused to the ocean by dipping a needle in it.

There are two wordings in the above tradition. One reads 'Loss to me' and the other 'Loss to My power'. The former indicates that Allah ﷻ possesses things from which He ﷻ gives to His servants whatever they ask Him ﷻ of it. This means that 'loss' is relevant in this context because, giving something, no matter how small, from something large would still cause a certain loss. The latter also refers to all that Allah's ﷻ possession, but the former is more specific than the latter.

- My servants, these deeds of yours, which I am recording for you, I shall reward you for them. So he who finds good should praise Allah and he who does not find it should not blame anyone but himself.

Allah ﷻ closes His Words with His kindness towards His servants with respect to reward for their good deeds, a kindness which is worthy of praise. This is because Allah ﷻ is the One who commanded such good deeds, guided towards them, supported the servants in performing them, recorded them and will; therefore, reward for them. All that

is part of His bounty and kindness, for every blessing from Him is a bounty and every curse is an act of justice. Furthermore, the mercy which He ascribes to Himself to be merciful towards the servants and the support of the believers He ﷻ has promised are not like people's obligations towards each other, which (the latter) may be acts of justice rather than bounty. Allah ﷻ is the Kind, by kindness, by achieving and ascribing it to Himself. In other words, by ascribing mercy to Himself and achieving the support of His believers, He ﷻ does kindness over kindness. And while Allah ﷻ explains that He is kind in treating the good deeds, and He ﷻ completes His kindness by recording them and rewarding for them, He ﷻ also explains that He ﷻ is Just in rewarding for the bad deeds, and said: "...**he who does not find it should not blame anyone but himself**," as expressed in another wording in the verse: ﴿And We did not wrong them, but their selves they wronged.﴾ (*Hud*:101) It is on this basis that the Islamic Law has been established, in compliance with the innate disposition (*Al-Fitra*) on which Allah ﷻ created people.[1]

[1]Ibn Taymiyya (*Majmu' Al-Fatawa:* 18/136-209)

Ibn Rajab's Interpretation

Imam Ahmad said: This tradition is the most honourable for the people of *Sham* (Syrians)

As regards the injustice which Allah ﷻ has made unlawful for Himself and against anybody, it is expressed in more than one verse: ﴿And Allah does not want to wrong *Jinn* and mankind.﴾ (*Al-Imran*:108), ﴿And Allah does not want to wrong the servants.﴾ (*Ghafir*:31), ﴿ And Allah does not wrong people anything.﴾, ﴿And you Lord does not wrong the servants.﴾ (*Fusilat*:46), ﴿Allah does not harm anything so much as an atom's weight: if a fine deed exists, he multiplies it.﴾ (*An-Nisa'*:40), and ﴿While anyone who has performed honourable deeds and is a believer will need fear no injustice nor any curtailment.﴾ (*Ta-Ha*:112). In the latter verse, *curtailment* refers to rewards, which means that Allah ﷻ will not cut down from the rewards of good deeds. *Injustice* refers to the punishment of other's sins.

Examples such as these are profuse in the Qur'ān, and they imply that Allah ﷻ is capable of injustice, but He ﷻ does not do it, because of His Bounty, Generosity and Kindness towards His servants. Several scholars interpreted *Zulm* as: Not putting

things in their right order, and interpreted it as the freedom to interfere in someone else's property without his permission, they say that *Zulm.*

- **"And unlawful for you, so do not commit injustice against one another**." It is unlawful for any servant to commit injustice against another; not only that but, injustice is unlawful in general. There are two types of injustice: Injustice against the self, of which the most serious form is polytheism and Injustice against another person.
As for the former, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿Ascribing a partner to Allah is such a serious wrong.﴾ (*Luqman*:13). In this context, the person who ascribes a partner to Allah ﷻ has the created the status of the creator, and thus, worships him. Hence, this corresponds to the interpretation of *Zulm* which says: not putting things in their right order. Several verses in the Qur'ān which mention the threat to the wrongdoers imply the polytheists. Observe the following verse: ﴿And the disbelievers are the wrongdoers.﴾ (*Al-Baqara*:254). This type also includes the various acts of obedience, which include serious and minor sins.

As for the latter, to which the above tradition refers, the prophet ﷺ said in his last sermon of the Farewell Pilgrimage: "Your blood, your wealth, honour are

as sacred and inviolable as this day of yours, in this month of yours, in this town of yours." It was reported that this sermon was given on the Day of Slaughter (*Yawm An-Nahr*:11th Dhul-Hijja). In another narration, the prophet ﷺ was reported to have said, "Listen to me and you will live on, do not commit injustice against one another, for the wealth of another Muslim is unlawful to take unless he agrees to it willingly."

It is also reported in Sahih Al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim on the authority of Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه that the prophet ﷺ said, "Injustice will be darkness on the Day of Judgment."

Abu Musa رضي الله عنه quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "Allah ﷻ will gradually lead the wrongdoer on so that when He ﷻ seizes him, He would not let him off." Then, the prophet ﷺ recited, ﴿Even so will your Lord seize things when He takes over any towns while they are doing wrong; His seizing will be painful, severe.﴾ (*Hud*:102)[1]

Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "Whoever has wronged his brother, should ask for his pardon (before his death), as (in the Hereafter), there will be neither a dinar nor a dirham. (He

[1]Al-Bukhari and Muslim

should secure pardon in this life) before some of his good deeds are taken as compensation and given to his brother, or if he has done no good deeds, some of his brother's bad deeds are taken from him and added on to his bad deeds."[2]

- **"My servants, all of you are liable to err except one whom I guide on the right path, so seek right guidance from Me so that I may direct you to the right path. O My servants, all of you are hungry (need food) except the one whom I feed, so beg food from Me, so that I may give it to you. O My servants, all of you are naked (need clothes) except the one whom I provide with garments, so beg clothes from Me, so that I may clothe you. O My servants, you commit a wrong night and day and I am there to pardon your sins, so beg pardon from Me so that I may grant you pardon."** This part implies that all creations are in need of Allah ﷻ in obtaining interest and averting harm in their worldly and religious affairs, and that they do not possess anything of all these for themselves. Whomever Allah ﷻ does not bestow His guidance and provision upon, will be deprived of them in the present life, and whomever Allah ﷻ

[2]Al-Bukhari

does not grant pardon of his sins, will be deprived of them in the Hereafter.

There are several relevant examples in the Qur'ān, among which are:
- ﴿Whomever Allah guides, will be guided, and whomever Allah misguides, will never find any patron to set him straight.﴾ (*Al-Kahf*:17)

- ﴿There is no withholding any mercy that Allah may open up for mankind; while neither is there any [means of] sending anything later on once He has withheld it. He is the Powerful, the Wise.﴾ (*Fatir*:2)

- ﴿There is not any creature on earth but that Allah provides for it.﴾ (*Hud*:6)

- Allah ﷻ says in the story of Adam and Eve who said: ﴿They said, 'Our Lord, we wronged ourselves, and if you do not pardon us and be merciful towards us, we will surely be of the losers.﴾ (*Al-A'raf*:23)

- In the story of Nuh عليه السلام, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿And if you do not forgive me and be merciful towards me, I shall surely be of the losers.﴾ (*Hud*:47)

- Ibrahim's عليه السلام invocations of Allah ﷻ affirm that Allah's ﷻ exclusive possession of such capabilities

justify that there is no god, but Allah ﷻ Alone, and any ascription of a partner to Him is false: ﴿Have you ever seen what you have been worshipping, you and your fathers, the oldtimers? They are enemies of mine, except for the Lord of the Universe Who created me. He guides me and is the One Who feeds me and gives me something to drink. Whenever I fall ill, He heals me; [He is] the One Who will cause me to die, then bring me back to life [again]; the One Who I expect will forgive me my mistakes on the Day for Repayment. My Lord, bestow discretion on me and acquaint me with honourable men.﴾ (*Ash-Shu'ra'*:75-83) This verse indicates that Whoever Alone created and guided the servant, and is capable of causing him to die and bringing him to life, and pardoning his sins in the Hereafter, is the One Worthy of the exclusivity of creation, worship, request, submission and refuge. Allah ﷻ says in this context: ﴿Allah is the One Who has created you, then provided for you; next He will cause you to die, then revive you. Are there any of your associates who can perform anything like that? Glory be to Him; Exalted is He over anything they may associate [with Him].﴾ (*Ar-Rum*:40)

Generally, there is evidence in the tradition that Allah ﷻ loves to be asked by the servants in all their religious and worldly interests such as food, drink

and dress; just as He ﷻ loves to be asked guidance and forgiveness. Some predecessors would even ask Allah ﷻ during his prayer salt for his dough and feed for his sheep.

Some interpreters of the tradition believe that the part "**all of you are liable to err except one whom I guide on the right path**" contradicts the tradition quoted by Ayyadh Ibn Himar from the prophet ﷺ which says: "Allah ﷻ says, 'I created My servants *hunafa'* (pure Faith) (in another wording), as Muslims, and Satans misguided them." This is not true because, Allah ﷻ created the Children of Adam عليه السلام with a disposition to accept and incline towards Islam only as a religion, and to prepare strongly for it. However, a servant must learn Islam effectively, because before knowing Islam, one is in a state of ignorance. Allah ﷻ says in this context: ﴿And Allah drives you out of the wombs of your mothers and you do not know anything.﴾ (*An-Nahl*:78), and to His Messenger, ﴿Did He not find you erring, and guides you.﴾ (*Adh-Dhuha*:7) The verse implies that Allah ﷻ found His Messenger ignorant of the Book and Wisdom which He taught him. Hence, Allah ﷻ says in another verse: ﴿Thus We have revealed a spirit from Our bidding for you. You did not know what either the Book or Faith were, but We have set

it up as a Light by means of which We guide any of Our servants whom We wish.﴾ (*Ash-Shura*:52)

Man was born with a disposition of accepting the truth . If Allah ﷻ should guide him, He ﷻ would cause someone to teach him guidance, and he would, as a result, be guided in reality, after he had been guided by the force of Allah ﷻ. However, if Allah ﷻ should misguides him, He ﷻ would cause someone for the task of misguidance and alteration of the in-born disposition. The prophet ﷺ said: "Every newborn is born on *al-Fitra* (Islam), and it is his/her parents who Judaise, Christianize, and turn him/her into a Magus."

As for the part "**O My servants, you commit a wrong night and day and I am there to pardon your sins,**" there are two types of guidance: general and particular. The general guidance refers to Islam and Faith, and this is ongoing. The particular guidance refers to the knowledge of the details of Faith and Islam, and Allah's ﷻ support in such a knowledge. Every believer needs this type of guidance night and day. Hence, Allah ﷻ commands His servants to recite *Al-Fatiha* the opening Chapter of the Qur'ān, because it contains the part, ﴿...guide us to the Right Path﴾ (*Al-Fatiha*:6). Further, the prophet ﷺ used to say the following invocation at

night: "Guide me to the truth which has been disputed over with Your Permission, for You guide whomever You will to the Right Path." Another example of this guidance is the expression 'Allah will guide you' which a sneezer says when he is told 'Bless you,' as laid down by the *Sunna.*
Relevantly, the prophet ﷺ ordered Ali ﷺ to ask Allah ﷻ guidance, and taught Al-Hasan ﷺ to say the following during *Al-Qunut* invocation at *Al-Witr* prayers: "*Allahumma hdini fiman hadayta* (O Allah, guide me to that which you have guided to)."

As regards the part "**So beg pardon from Me so that I may grant you pardon,"** reference is made to the seeking of forgiveness from Allah ﷻ. The servant badly needs forgiveness, as he often errs night and day. The Qur'ān repeatedly refers to the issue of repentance and forgiveness, and commands them. In this context, the prophet ﷺ said:

- -"Every person errs, and the best of those who err are the repentant."
- "By Allah ﷻ, I seek Allah's ﷻ forgiveness and repentance one hundred times a day."

In another wording:

- "O people, seek forgiveness from your Lord, for I seek His forgiveness and repentance one hundred times a day."

- "O people, seek forgiveness and repentance from your Lord, for I seek His forgiveness and repentance one hundred times a day."

Imam Ahmad reported: "Hudayfa said, "I used to have a sharp tongue and would use bad language with my family, and found myself unable to extract myself from such a bad habit. When I mentioned it to the prophet ﷺ, he said, "Why do not you seek Allah's forgiveness, Hudayfa. For, I seek His forgiveness and repentance one hundred times a day."

Abu Bakr ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "I seek Allah's ﷻ forgiveness and repentance one hundred times a day."

An-Nisa'I reported on the authority of Abu Musa ﷺ: "We were sitting when the prophet ﷺ came and said, "There is not a morning that goes by, but that I seek Allah's ﷻ forgiveness one hundred times a day."

Ibn Umar ﷺ reported: "We used to count the prophet's ﷺ saying "O Lord, forgive me and accept my repentance, for You are the All-Forgiving, All-Merciful" one hundred times at one sitting.[1]

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[1]Imam Ahmad, Abu Daud, At-Tirmidi, An-Nasa'I and Ibn Majjah.

An-Nasa'I reported: "Abu Hurayra said, "I cannot say I have said "I seek Allah's ﷻ forgiveness and repentance" more than the prophet ﷺ.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of 'Aisha: "The prophet ﷺ used to say, 'O Allah count me among those who, when they perform an honourable deed, rejoice thereat, and when they do a bad deed, ask for forgiveness."

- **"O My servants, you will not reach My Harm so that you may harm, nor reach My Benefit so that you may benefit Me."** This part implies that the servants are incapable of extending any benefit to Allah ﷻ, for He is not in need of His servants' obedient acts, and it is they rather than him who will benefit from any good acts. Similarly, it is they, rather than Allah ﷻ, who will be harmed by their sins. Allah ﷻ says in this context: ﴿Let not those who hasten on to disbelief sadden you; they will never injure Allah in any way.﴾ (*Al-'Imran*:176), ﴿Any one who turns on his heels will never injure Allah in any way.﴾ (*Al-Imran*:144)

During his sermons, the prophet ﷺ used to say: "Whoever disobeys Allah ﷻ and His Messenger

will be misguided, will injure but himself, and will not injure Allah ﷻ in any way."

Further relevant verses are: ﴿If you should disbelieve, Allah owns whatever is in Heaven and whatever is on Earth. Allah is Transcendent, Praiseworthy.﴾ (*An-Nisa'*:131), ﴿And Mosses said, "If you and all the people on earth disbelieve, Allah is Transcendent, Praiseworthy.﴾ (*Ibrahim*:8), ﴿And whoever disbelieves, Allah is Transcendent over the Universe.﴾ (*Al-'Imran*:97) and ﴿Neither their meat nor their blood ever reaches Allah, but heedfulness on your part does reach Him.﴾ (*Al-Hajj*:37). This means that Allah ﷻ loves His servants to fear and obey Him, just as He hates their disobedience to Him. Allah ﷻ gets happier when He receives a person's repentance, than someone who has lost his riding camel nearby, with his food and drink in it, and kept on asking Allah ﷻ to return it to him until he despaired and gave up, and was so sleepy that he fell asleep and when he woke up, he found his riding camel in front of him; and this is one of the happiest moment any creature would imagine.

Despite all that any benefit ensued from the servants' actions would go to them, and this is part of Allah's ﷻ perfection in His generosity and kindness towards His servants, His love to benefit

them and prevent harm from reaching them. In return, Allah ﷻ loves His servants to know, love, fear, obey and approach Him ﷻ. He also likes them to know that it is only One capable of forgiving their sins, as the following tradition indicates: "Whoever amongst you knows that I am capable of forgiveness and asks Me for it, I will certainly forgive his sins."

The prophet ﷺ was quoted as saying: "If a servant sins and says, 'O Lord, I have sinned, forgive me,' Allah ﷻ will say, 'My servant knew that he has a Lord Who forgives, so I have forgiven My servant.'"[1]

Ali ﷺ reported: "The prophet ﷺ mounted his camel and said *Al-Hamdu Lillah* (Praise to Allah) and *Al-Lahu Akbar* (Allah is Great) three times, then said, "Glory be to You. I have wronged my self, so forgive, for there is no one who forgives sins but You." The prophet ﷺ then smiled and said, 'Your Lord is amazed at His servant when he says, 'Forgive my sins,' knowing that there is no one who can forgive sins but Me.'"[2]

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[1]Al-Bukhari

[2]Imam Ahmad, and At-Tirmidi who classed it as authentic.

The prophet ﷺ said: "By Allah, Allah ﷻ is more merciful towards His servants than a mother towards her baby."[3]

One day, one of Dhu-Nun's companions was wandering and saying: Ah! Where is my heart? Who has found my heart? One day, as he was walking down a street, he found a child crying. The child was beaten up by his mother, who drove him out of the house and locked him out. He started turning right and left, not knowing where to go. He stood at the door and started crying and saying: O my mother, who will open the door for me if you shut it on my face, and who comes near me if you are angry with me? The mother showed mercy towards her son, then peered through the keyhole of the door and saw her son with tears in his eyes, and dust all over him. So, she opened the door, put him on her lap and started kissing him, saying: O my dearest, it was you who drove me to treat you like that, and it was you who incurred such treatment on himself. Had you obeyed me, you would not have suffered any harm from me. The boy started shouting: I have found my heart, I have found my heart.

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[3]Al-Bukhari

Remember Allah's ﷻ verse which says: ﴿Who, when they commit an indecency or wrong themselves, remember Allah, and pray forgiveness for their sins – and who shall forgive sins but Allah?﴾ (*Al-Imran*:135). Here reference is made to sinners who have nobody to resort to and depend on for the forgiveness of their sins, but Allah ﷻ. Another relevant verse is: ﴿As for the three who were left behind, until the earth seemed too cramped for them, spacious though it is, and even their souls seemed to strangle them and they thought there would be no refuge from Allah except through Himself; then He relented towards them so they might repent. Allah is Ever-Turning, Merciful.﴾ (*At-Tawba*:118), in which Allah ﷻ organized their repentance according to their belief that there is no escape from Allah ﷻ, but to Him. For example, if a servant fears another, he would run from him and seek someone else's protection. However, if one fears Allah ﷻ, he would have no protector but Allah ﷻ. So, the fearful runs from Allah ﷻ to Allah ﷻ. Hence, the prophet ﷺ used to say the following invocations: "There is no escape nor rescue from You, except to You," and "I seek refuge in Your Satisfaction with me from Your Curse on me, in Your Pardon, from Your Punishment, and in You from You."

Al-Fudhayl Ibn Ayyadh ﷺ said: "There is not a day on which the night falls and darkness spreads, but that Allah ﷻ says: Who is more generous than Me, while the creations are disobedient to Me and I am watching them. I care for them in their beds as if they have not disobeyed Me, I take charge of their protection as if they have not sinned with respect to what is between them and Me. I am graceful towards the sinner and wrongdoer? Has anyone invoked Me and I did not grant his request? Has anyone asked me anything and I did not give it to him? Has any one come to My door and turned him down? I am the Grace and grace comes from Me. I am the Generous and generosity comes from Me. Part of My generosity is My forgiveness of the disobedient, and part of My generosity, I give the servant what he asks me for and what he does not ask me for. Part of My generosity, I give the repentant as if he did not disobey Me. To whom will creatures escape, but to Him? To whose door will sinners escape, but to His?"[1]

- "O My servants, even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, even if the whole of the human race, and that of the *Jinns*, become (equally) God-conscious like the heart of a single person amongst you, nothing will add to My

[1] Transmitted by Abu Nu'aym

Power. O My servants, even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, the whole human race, and that of the *Jinns* too become in unison the most wicked (all beating) like the heart of a single person, it will cause no loss of My Power." Allah's ﷻ Power will neither increase through the creatures' obedience to Him, even if they were all pious and their hearts like the heart of a single person; nor decrease through the sins of the disobedient, even if the *Jinns* and mankind were all disobedient and their hearts like the heart of the most insolent amongst them. Allah ﷻ is the Transcendent in His self over all, and He has the absolute perfection in His Self, Attributes and Actions. His is a perfect Power, flawless from whichever aspect.

The prophet's ﷺ statement: "And evil cannot be attributed to You," implies that pure evil whose non-existence is better than its existence cannot be found in Allah's ﷻ Power. Allah ﷻ created His creations in accordance with His wisdom and justice. He ﷻ specifically bestowed grace on some people and discarded others in justice, because of the wisdom Allah ﷻ sees in doing so. However, this view is arguable and contradicts part of the above tradition that "**even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, even if the whole of the**

human race, and that of the *Jinns*, become (equally) God-conscious like the heart of a single person amongst you, nothing will add to My Power. O My servants, even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, the whole human race, and that of the *Jinns* too become in unison the most wicked (all beating) like the heart of a single person, it will cause no loss of My Power," which means that His Power is perfect from whichever aspect, and neither does it increase or perfect with obedience, nor does it diminish or be affected by anything.

This tradition also indicates that the source of piety and insolence is the heart. This is to say that if the heart is pious, then the rest of the organs would follow suit, but if the heart is insolent, then the rest of the organs would follow suit; as the prophet ﷺ once said, "Piety is in here," pointing at his breast."

- "O My servants, even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, the whole human race, and that of *Jinns* also, all stand in one place and you ask Me and I confer upon every person what he asks for, it will not in any way cause any loss to Me (even less) than that which is caused to the ocean by dipping a needle in it." This part refers to Allah's ﷻ complete capability and power, and

also to His never-ending treasures, which will never be drained even though the first amongst you, the last amongst you, the whole human race, and that of *Jinns* also, all stand in one place and ask Him for whatever they want. The tradition also urges mankind to ask Allah ﷻ for their needs.

Abu Hurayra ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "When one of you invokes Allah ﷻ, he should not say, 'O Allah, forgive me if you wish,' but should do it with determination and desire to be forgiven, for nothing transcends Allah ﷻ."
Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri ﷺ said: "When you invoke Allah ﷻ, ask for something big, for what Allah ﷻ has does not end, and do it with determination, for Allah ﷻ will not dislike it."

It is reported in some Israelites that Allah ﷻ says: "Is Other than Me wished for to intervene in adversities, whilst adversities are in My hand and I am the Living, the Eternal? Is other them Me wished for and his door knocked on, whilst I have the keys of treasures and My Door is open for whomever asks Me? Has anyone come to Me in a crisis and I let him down? Has anyone taken refuge in Me from a tyrant and I let him down? Has anyone knocked on My door and I did not open it for him? I am the highest degree of hopes, so how

will hopes cease to exist without Me? Am I avaricious so that My servant would feel avaricious towards Me? Are not the present life, the Hereafter, generosity, grace all mine? So, what prevents the hopers from expecting me to fulfill their hopes? If I gather the inhabitants of Heavens and Earth and give each one of them what they want, My donation will not end what I have, and fulfill everyone's wish, such fulfillment will not reduce what equals an atom from My power. After all, how will a power over which I am the Guardian decrease? How bad it is for those who despair of My mercy, and how bad it is for those who disobey Me and violated the things which I made unlawful!

As for the part "**it will not in any way cause any loss to Me (even less) than that which is caused to the ocean by dipping a needle in it,"** it implies that what Allah ﷻ has does not end at all. This is explicitly expressed in the following verse: ﴿What you have goes, and what Allah has remains.﴾ (*An-Nahl*:96). Metaphorically, when a needle is dipped in the ocean and taken out, it will not reduce anything from it. Similarly, if a bird drinks of the ocean's water, it will not decrease the amount of its water. In this context, Al-Khader عليه السلام gave a similar example to Mosses عليه السلام (see *Al-Kahf*:109) with respect to their knowledge compared to that of

Allah ﷻ in a metaphorical way; that the ocean is till being replenished with the waters of the earth, and no matter how much is taken from it, it will not reduce anything from it, for it is being replenished with more than what was taken from it. Similarly, the food in Paradise does not decrease: ﴿And plenty of fruit, which neither rationed nor forbidden.﴾ (*Al-Waqi'a*:32)

It is also said in this context that "Every time a fruit is taken, another replaces it." This is evidenced by the prophet's ﷺ statement in the sermon given on the day of the eclipse of the sun: "And I was shown Paradise and wanted to have a bunch (of grapes) from it. Had I taken it and given it to you to eat, you would have eaten from it as long as this life lasts."[11]

The same tradition is reported by Imam Ahmad on the authority of Jabir ﷺ, but in another wording: "Had I brought it for you, every one in the Heavens and Earth would have eaten of it, and still would not reduce its amount." Similarly, the fowl meat which the inhabitants of Paradise eat is being replenished

[11] Al-Bukhari and Muslim, on the authority of Ibn Abbas ﷺ.

as if it were fresh all the time, and still nothing will be reduced from it.

There is another tradition which was quoted from the prophet ﷺ in different chains of narrations which contain some weakness, as reported by Ka'b and also by Abu Umama Al-Bahili who said: Also the drink; it will be drunk until it finishes then would come back to its place."
Some deceased pious people appeared in a vision to others, long after their death and said, "I have not eaten anything since I left you, except some fowl meat. Do not you know that the food of Paradise does not end."

The following tradition reported by At-Tirmidi and Ibn Majjah also explains the reason why what Allah ﷻ has does not grow less: " I am Generous and Glorious, doing what I wish. My Giving is speech and My Punishment is speech. My command to a thing when I ant it is just to say to it 'Be' and it comes into being." This command is explicitly expressed in the following verse: ﴿His command if He wants something is just to say to it 'Be' and it is.﴾ (*Yasin*:82) and ﴿Our Command to something if We want it is just to say to it 'Be' and it is.﴾ (*An-Nahl*:40)

Abu Hurayra ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "Allah's ﷻ treasures are speech, so if Allah ﷻ wants something, He will just say to it 'Be' and it is."
Therefore, since that anything of donation or punishment which He wants is just a matter of words, then how His power will decrease? The same applies to His creations. Observe the following verse: ﴿Jesus' case with Allah was the same as Adam's: He created him from dust; then told him: "Be!" and he was.﴾ (*Al-Imran*:59)

It is reported in some Israelites that Allah ﷻ said to Mosses ﷺ: "O Mosses,

do not fear anyone but Me, as long as I have Power, and My Power is eternal. O Mosses, do not care about My Provision as long as it plenty and will never finish. O Mosses, do not have anybody as a companion, but Me as long as you have found Me as a companion, whenever you ask Me, you will find Me. O Mosses, do not feel safe from My, as long as you have not yet crossed the Way to Paradise."

- "**My servants, these deeds of yours, which I am recording for you, I shall reward you for them.**"

This means that Allah ﷻ records the deeds of His servants and rewards them accordingly, as the following verses suggest: ﴿And whoever has done an atom's weight of good will see it; while whoever has done an atom's weight of evil will see it.﴾ (*Az-Zalzala*:7-8), ﴿They will find whatever they have done presented there, even though your Lord will not harm anyone.﴾ (*Al-Kahf*:49), ﴿Some day when every person will find whatever good he has done is presented [as evidence] as well as whatever bad he has done, he would like a long stretch [to lie] between them and himself.﴾ (*Al-Imran*:30) and ﴿Some day when Allah will resurrect them all and inform them of anything they have done. Allah has calculated it while they have forgotten it.﴾ (*Al-Mujadala*:6)

It appears that **"I shall reward you for them**," may either imply that reward will take place on the Day of Judgment, as the following verse: ﴿You will merely be repaid your earnings on the Day of Judgment.﴾ (*Al-Imran*:185); or both in the present life and the Hereafter, on the basis of the verse which says: ﴿Anyone who commits evil will be rewarded accordingly.﴾ (*An-Nisa'*:123) The prophet ﷺ was quoted as interpreting it in the following way: The believers will be rewarded for their evil deeds in the present life, and their good

deeds will be stored for them in the Hereafter and be rewarded accordingly. As for the disbelievers, they will be rewarded for their good deeds in the present life, while their evil deeds are stored in the Hereafter, and they will be punished for them there. Evil deeds are rewarded accordingly without any addition, save if Allah ﷻ grants his pardon; while a good deed is rewarded with ten equal deeds, which double to seven hundred, to more amounts which only Allah ﷻ knows. Allah ﷻ says in this context: ﴿Surely the patient will be paid their wages without any reckoning.﴾ (*Az-Zumar*:10)

- So he who finds good should praise Allah and he who does not find it should not blame anyone but himself."

Ali ﷺ said: "A servant should not hope for anyone, but his Lord and should not fear anything, but his sin."

If Allah ﷻ wants success and guidance for a servant, then He ﷻ will support and guide him to His obedience, and that as a gesture of grace and mercy on His part. But if He wants to let him down, He ﷻ will let his soul be his resort and separate between them; thus, causing the Satan to seduce him because he neglected Allah's ﷻ remembrance

and followed his desires. That is part of Allah's ﷻ justice, and the evidence which will be available will be that of Allah ﷻ against the servant, from the Book and the dispatch of Messengers. Therefore, mankind will have no evidence to expound his case before Allah ﷻ, since Messengers have come and conveyed the Message Allah ﷻ had intended.

- "So he who finds good should praise Allah and he who does not find it should not blame anyone but himself." If this closing statement means that the find takes place in the present life, then whoever finds it is commanded to praise Allah ﷻ for what he has found of the good deeds for which he has received a prompt reward. Hence, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿We shall let anyone who acts honourably, whether it is a man or a woman, provided he is a believer, live a happy life and reward them with their earnings for the finest deeds they have been doing.﴾ (*An-Nahl*:97). A servant is also commanded to blame his self for whichever sin it has committed and for which he has been promptly punished: ﴿Still We shall let them taste worldly torment rather than supreme torment, so they may yet turn back.﴾ (*As-Sajda*:21). When a believer is visited by a trial in the present life, he turns back and blames his self for it, and is forced by such a trial to return to Allah for repentance and forgiveness.

The prophet ﷺ was quoted as saying: "When an illness visits a believer, and Allah ﷻ heals him, then that is an expiation for his past sins and a warning for what remains of his lifetime. But when an illness visits a hypocrite and is healed, then that will represent nothing for him; just like a camel which has been tied up, then released by its keepers, unaware of why it has been tied up and why it has been released."[1]

Salman Al-Farisi ﷺ said: "The Muslim is tried, and his trial will expiate his past sins and caution him of what remains; and the disbeliever is also tried, but his trial does not mean anything for him; just like a camel, whether released or tied up, it will not know for what reason."

However, if the closing statement implies that those who will find the good in the Hereafter should praise Allah ﷻ for what they have found, and that whoever finds other than that should blame but himself, on a Day when blame will be of no avail; then the wording is related to the command and its meaning is related to the information on what is or will happen; as the prophet ﷺ said in the following

[1] Sunan Abu Daud.

tradition: "Whoever deliberately invents a lie against me, then he should expect his abode to be in Hellfire." Hence, Allah ﷻ informs us about the inhabitants of Paradise and their praising Allah ﷻ for what He has bestowed upon them of his bounty in the following verses: ﴿We will strip away any rancour [that lingers] in their breasts. Rivers will flow underneath them and they will say: "Praise be to Allah who led us to this! We would never have been guided if Allah had not led us on.﴾ (*Al-A'raf*:43), ﴿They will say: "Praise be to Allah Who has held True to His promise for us and let us inherit the earth! We shall settle down anywhere we wish to in the Garden."﴾ (*Az-Zumar*:74) and ﴿They will say: "Praise to Allah Who has lifted sadness from us! Our Lord is Forgiving, Appreciative, the One Who has settled us in the Everlasting Home because of His bounty. No toil will ever touch us there nor will any weariness affect us in it.﴾ (*Fatir*:34-35).

Allah ﷻ also informs us in the following verses about the inhabitants of Hellfire who severely castigate themselves: ﴿Satan will say, once the matter has been settled: "Allah has given you a true promise, while I have both promised you and then broken my word with you. I have no authority over

you except that I appealed to you, and you responded to me. Do not blame me but blame yourselves!﴾ (*Ibrahim*:22), ﴿The ones who disbelieve will be addressed [as follows]: "Allah's disgust will be even greater than your own disgust is towards one another when you are called upon to believe and [still] disbelieve.﴾ (*Ghafir*:10)

Some pious predecessors used to strive in performing good deeds lest they should reproach the self for not doing so once deeds cease to exist (i.e. after death). Abu Hurayra ﷺ quoted the prophet ﷺ as saying: "There is not a person who dies, but that he regrets. If he has been good, he would wish he could have done better, and if he were bad, he would worry he has not been blamed."[1]

Masruq was told to cut down his efforts in seeking good deeds and he said: "By Allah ﷻ, if someone comes and informs me that Allah ﷻ will not punish me, I will strive in worshipping Him." He was asked, "How?" He replied, "Until my soul forgives me that if I am made to enter the Hellfire, I will not blame it. Do not you know the verse which says: ﴿No. I will not swear by the reproachful soul.﴾ Upon reaching the Hellfire, people would start blaming their souls, and a barrier would be established between them and what they desire.

[1] At-Tirmidi, (*Hadith* Marfu')

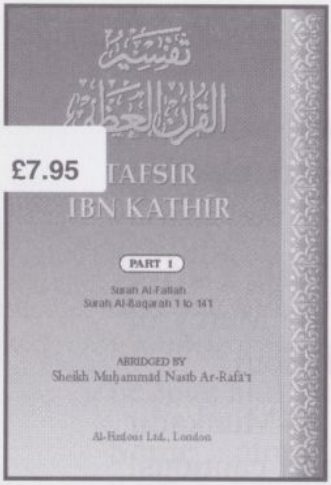
Their hopes would be cut off, and they would be denied mercy, and every one would start blaming his soul."

Amer Ibn Abd Qays used to say: "By Allah, I strive and strive. If I am saved then it is by the Mercy of Allah ﷻ. Otherwise, I will blame but my soul."

Ziyyad Ibn Ayyash used to say to Ibn Al-Munkadir and Safwane Ibn Salim: "Be serious and cautious! If matters turn up as we have expected, then that is good, otherwise do not blame but your souls."

Mutraf Ibn Abdullah also used to say: "Be diligent in harbouring good deeds. If things turn up as we have expected of Allah's ﷻ mercy and pardon, then we will have rewards, but if things turn up gloomy, as we fear of and are cautious about, then we would say: ﴿Our Lord, Take us out! We will act honourably, so differently from the way we have been acting.﴾ (*Fatir*:37).[1]

[1] Ibn Rajab, *Jami' Al-'Ulum wal-Hikam* [p:350], Dar Al-Jil, Beirut.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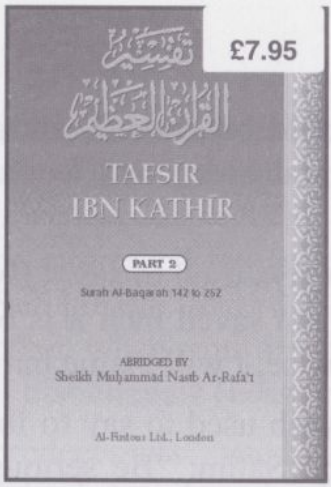
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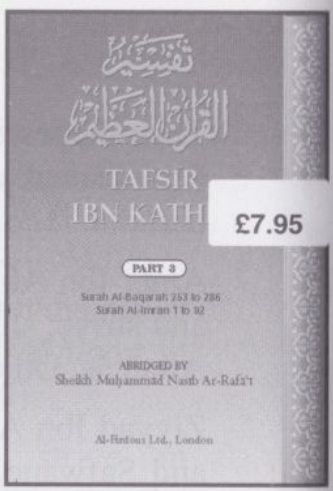
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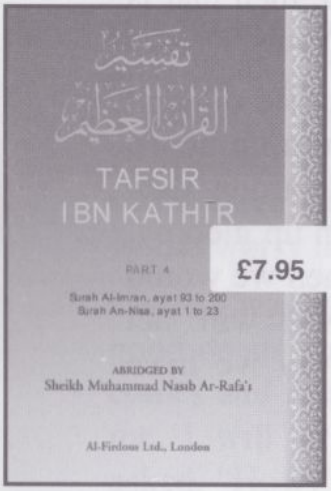
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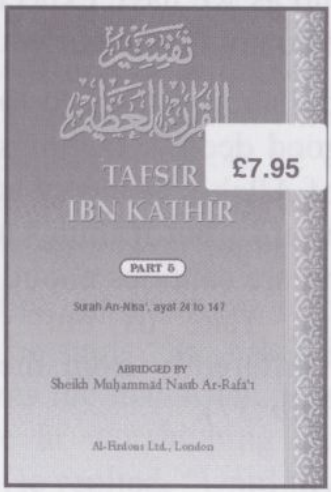
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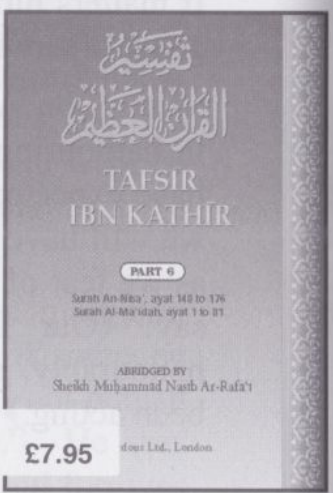
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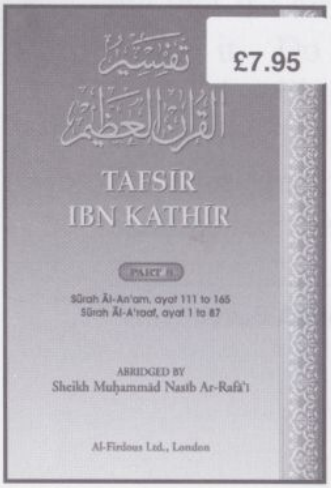
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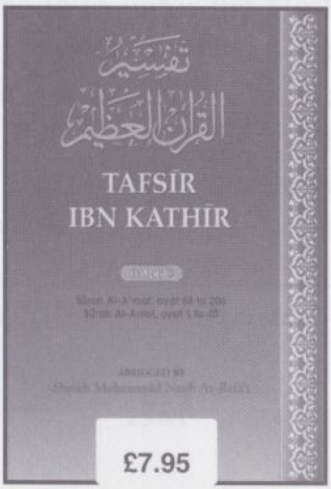
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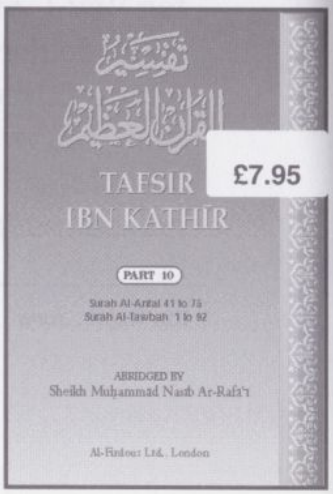
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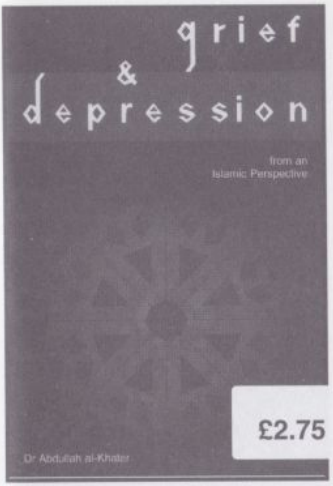
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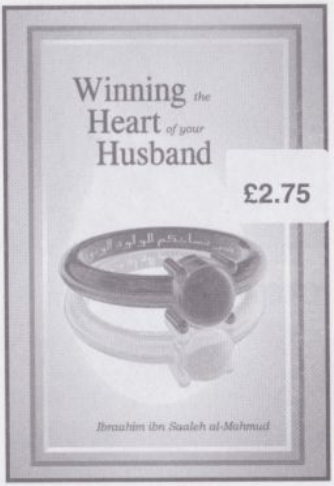
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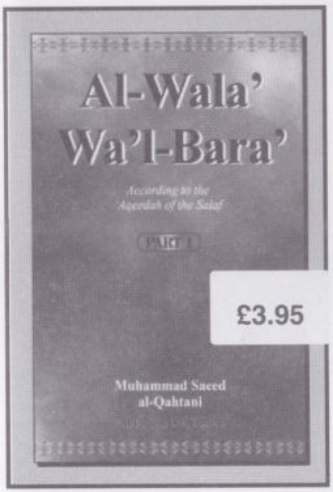
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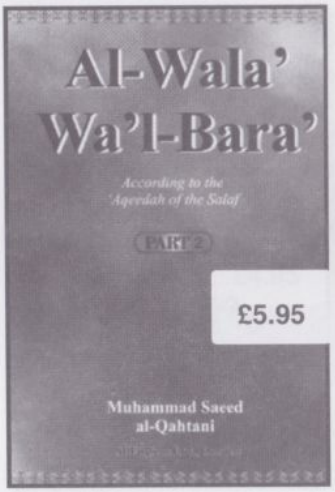
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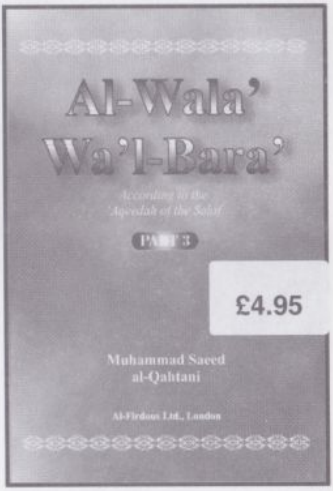
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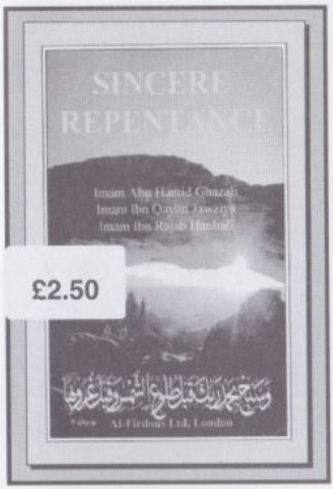
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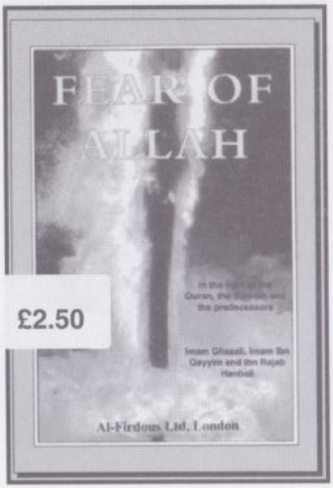
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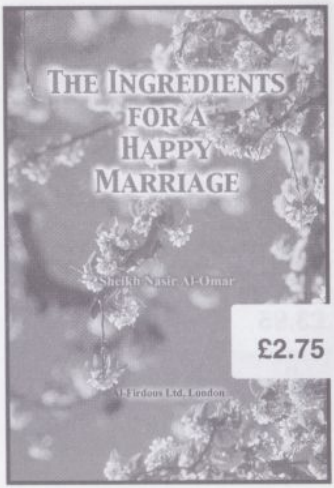
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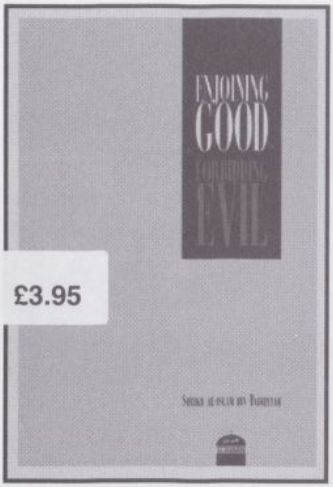

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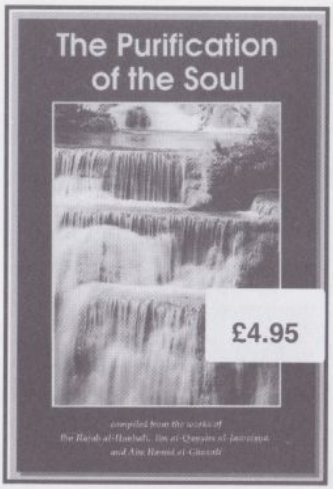

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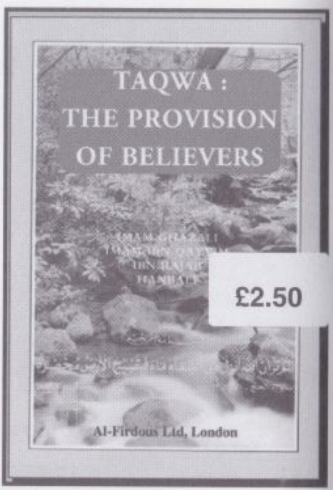

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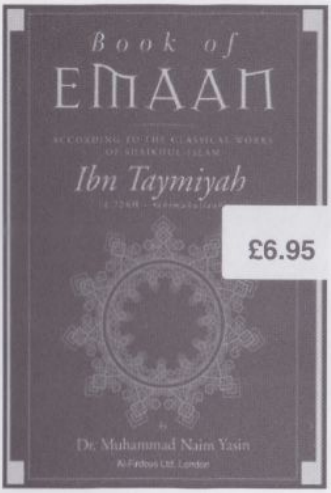

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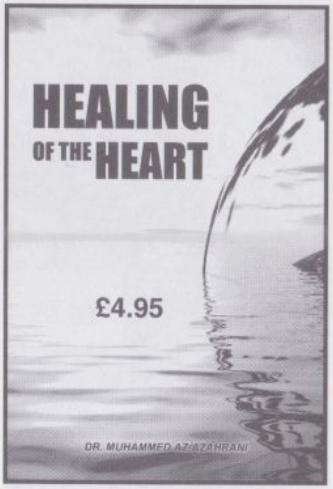

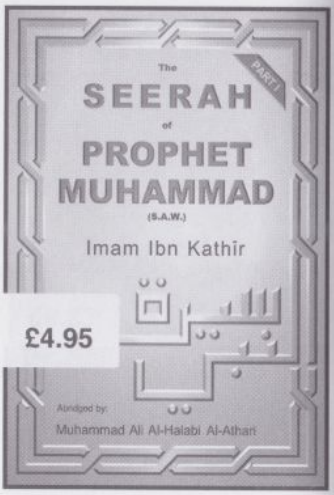

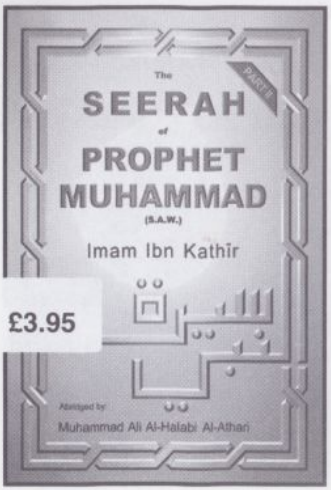

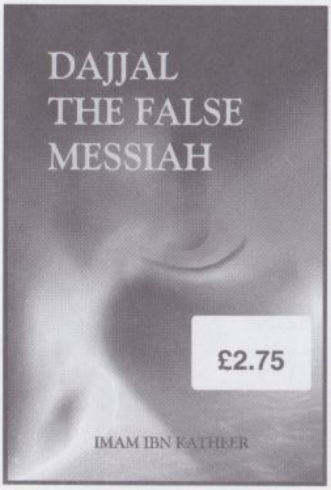

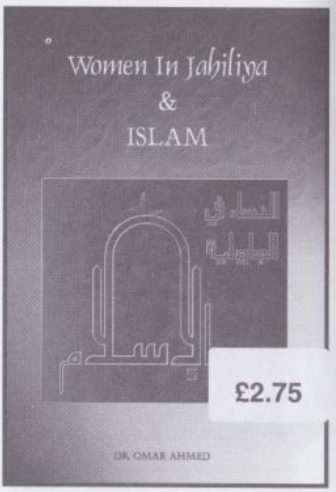

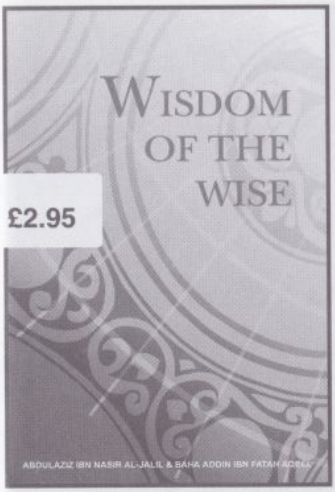

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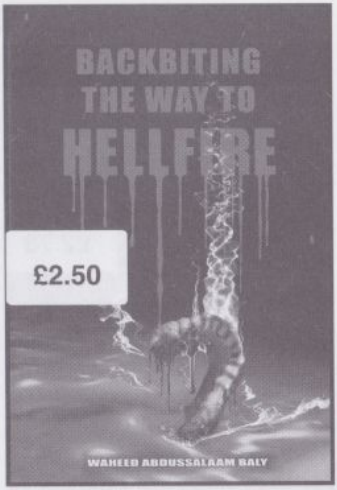

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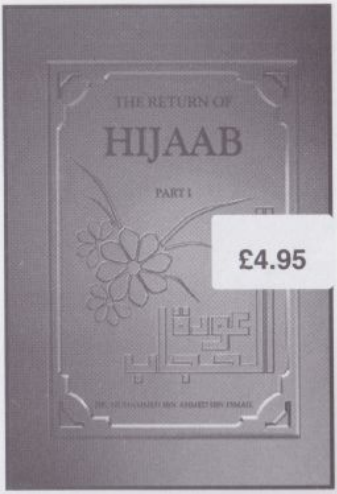

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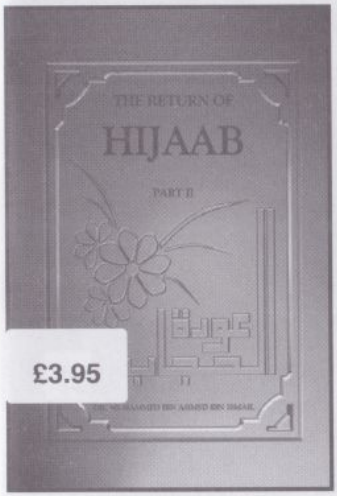

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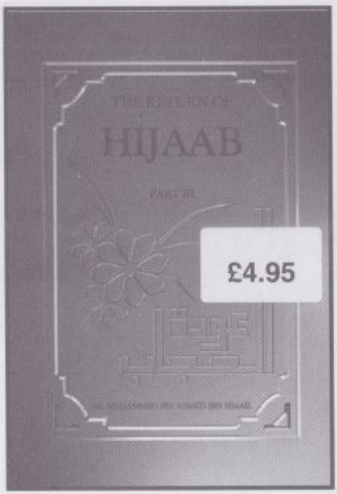

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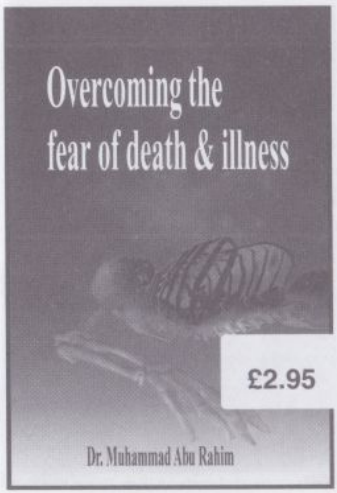

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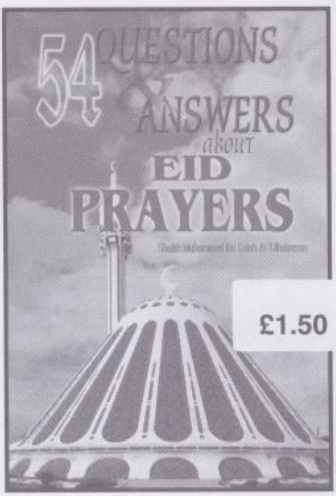

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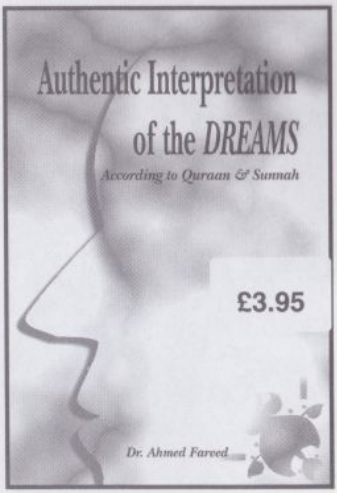

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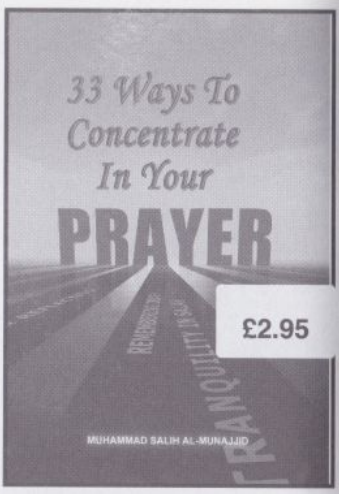
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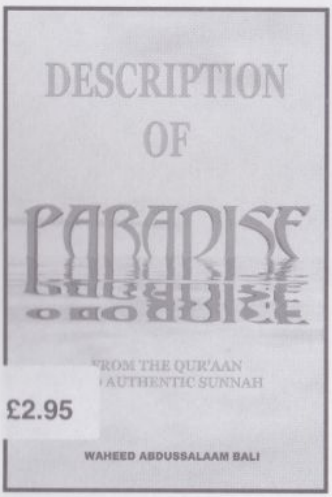
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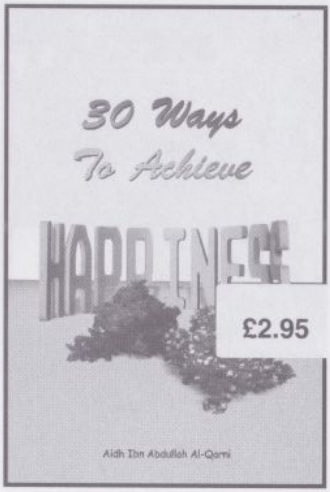
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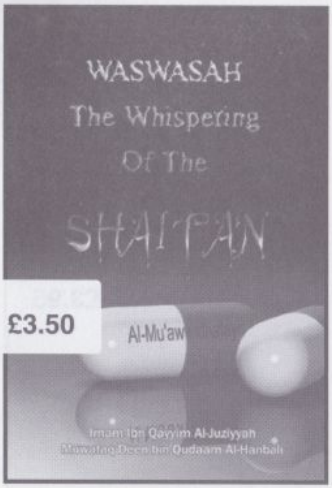
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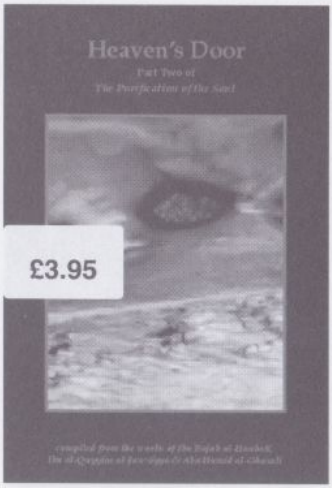
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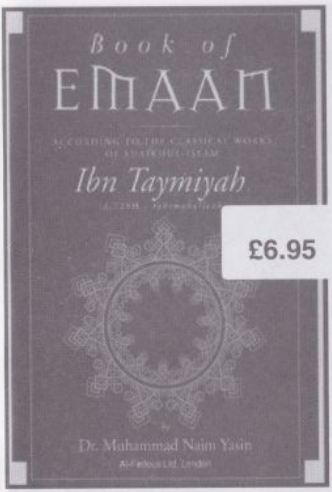
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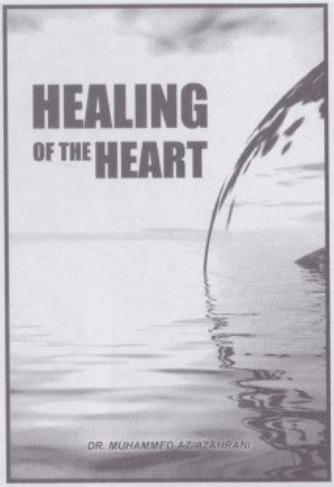
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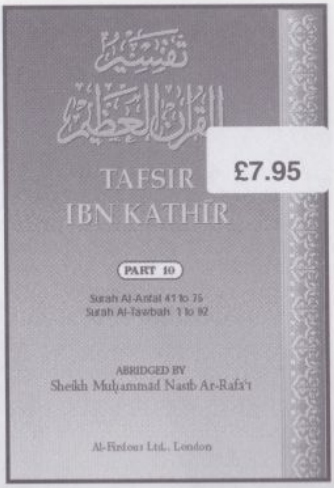
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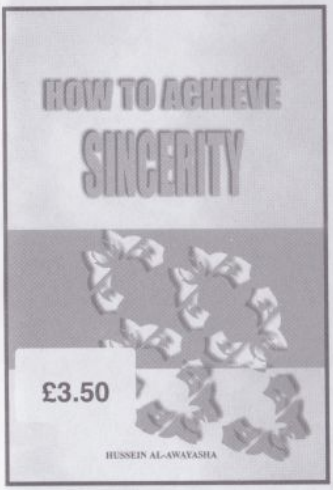
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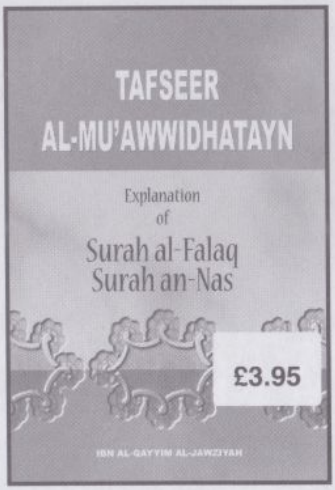
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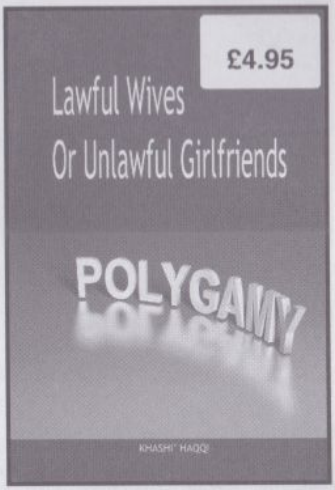
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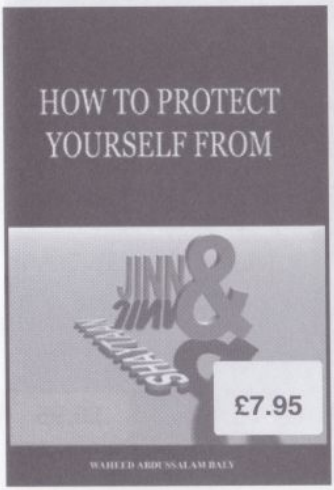
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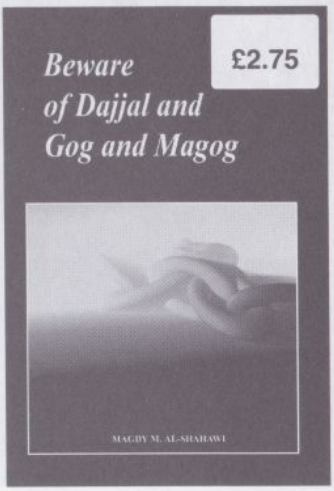
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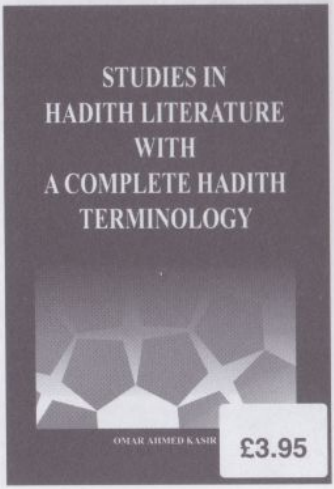
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